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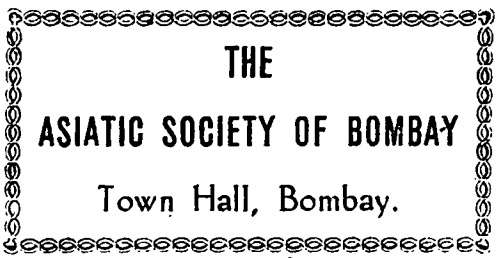

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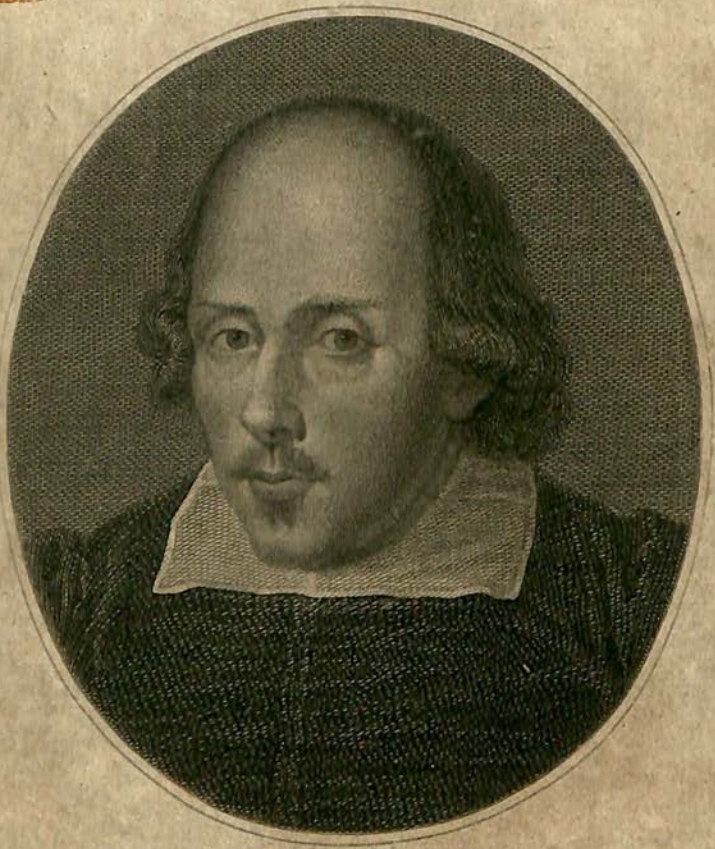

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Published by J. Johnson &c. March 31, 1805.

THE

PLAYS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

IN TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES.

WITH

THE CORRECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

VARIOUS COMMENTATORS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

43322 NOTES,

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON AND GEORGE STEEVENS.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

REVISED AND AUGMENTED

BY ISAAC REED,

WITH A GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

ΤΗΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΥΣ ΗΝ, ΤΟΝ ΚΑΛΑΜΟΝ ΑΠΟΒΡΕΧΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΝΟΥΝ.
Vet. Auct. apud. Suidam.

Time, which is continually washing away the dissoluble Fabricks of other Poets, passes without Injury by the Adamant of SHAKSPEARE.
Dr. Johnson's Preface.

MULTA DIES, VARIUSQUE LABOR MUTABILIS ÆVI
RETULIT IN MELIUS, MULTOS ALTERNA REVISENS
LUSIT, ET IN SOLIDO RURSUS FORTUNA LOCAVIT.
Virgil.

LONDON:

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1803.

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[J. Plymsell, Printer, Leather Lane, Holborn, London.]

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE merits of our great dramatick Bard, the pride and glory of his country, have been ſo amply diſplayed by perſons of various and firſt-rate talents, that it would appear like preſumption in any one, and eſpecially in him whoſe name is ſubſcribed to this Advertiſement, to imagine himſelf capable of adding any thing on ſo exhauſted a ſubject. After the labours of men of ſuch high eſtimation as Rowe, Pope, Warburton, Johnſon, Farmer, and Steevens, with others of inferior name, the rank of Shakſpeare in the poetical world is not a point at this time ſubject to controverſy. His pre-eminence is admitted; his ſuperiority confeſſed. Long ago it might be ſaid of him, as it has been, in the energetick lines of Johnſon, of one almoſt his equal,—

" At length, our mighty bard's victorious lays
" Fill the loud voice of univerſal praiſe;
" And baffled ſpite, with hopeleſs anguiſh dumb,
" Yields to renown the centuries to come."

a renown, eſtabliſhed on ſo ſolid a foundation, as to bid defiance to the caprices of faſhion, and to the canker of time.

Leaving, therefore, the Author in quiet poſſeſſion of that fame which neither detraction can leſſen nor panegyrick increaſe, the Editor will proceed to the conſideration of the work now preſented to the Publick.

It contains the laſt improvements and corrections of Mr. Steevens,* by whom it was prepared for the

* Of one to whom the readers of Shakſpeare are ſo much obliged, a ſlight memorial will not here be conſidered as miſplaced.

GEORGE STEEVENS was born at Poplar, in the county of Middleſex, in the year 1736. His father, a man of great reſpectability, was engaged in a buſineſs connected with the Eaſt India Company, by which he acquired an handſome fortune. Fortunately for his ſon, and for the publick, the clergyman of the place was Dr. Glouceſter Ridley, a man of great literary accompliſhments, who is ſtyled by Dr. Lowth *poeta natus*. With this gentleman an intimacy took place that united the two families cloſely together, and probably gave the younger branches of each that taſte for literature which both afterwards ardently cultivated. The firſt part of Mr. Steevens's education he received under Mr. Wooddeſon, at Kingſton-upon-Thames, where he had for his ſchool-fellows George Keate the poet, and Edward Gibbon the hiſtorian. From this ſeminary he removed in 1753 to King's College, Cambridge, and entered there under

preſs, and to whom the praiſe is due of having firſt adopted, and carried into execution, Dr. Johnſon's

the tuition of the Reverend Dr. Barford. After ſtaying a few years at the Univerſity, he left it without taking a degree, and accepted a commiſſion in the Eſſex militia, in which ſervice he continued a few years longer. In 1763 he loſt his father, from whom he inherited an ample property, which if he did not leſſen he certainly did not increaſe. From this period he ſeems to have determined on the courſe of his future life, and devoted himſelf to literary purſuits, which he followed with unabated vigour, but without any lucrative views, as he never required, or accepted, the ſlighteſt pecuniary recompence for his labours. His firſt reſidence was in the Temple, afterwards at Hampton, and laſtly at Hampſtead, where he continued near thirty years. In this retreat his life paſſed in one unbroken tenor, with ſcarce any variation, except an occaſional viſit to Cambridge, walking to London in the morning, ſix days out of ſeven, for the ſake of health and converſation, and returning home in the afternoon of the ſame day. By temperance and exerciſe he continued healthy and active until the laſt two years of his life, and to the concluſion of it did not relax his attention to the illuſtration of Shakſpeare, which was the firſt object of his regard. He died the 22d of January, 1800, and was buried in Poplar chapel.

To the eulogium contained in the following epitaph by Mr. Hayley, which differs in ſome reſpect from that inſcribed on the monument in Poplar chapel, thoſe who really knew Mr. Steevens will readily ſubſcribe:

" Peace to theſe aſhes! once the bright attire
" Of STEEVENS, ſparkling with æthereal fire!

admirable plan of illuſtrating Shakſpeare by the ſtudy of writers of his own time. By following this track, moſt of the difficulties of the author have been overcome, his meaning (in many inſtances apparently loſt) has been recovered, and much wild unfounded conjecture has been happily got rid of. By perſeverance in this plan, he effected more to the elucidation of his author than any if not all his predeceſſors, and juſtly entitled himſelf to the diſtinction of being confeſſed the beſt editor of Shakſpeare.

The edition which now ſolicits the notice of the publick is faithfully printed from the copy given by

" Whoſe talents, varying as the diamond's ray,
" Could faſcinate alike the grave or gay!

" How oft has pleaſure in the ſocial hour
" Smil'd at his wit's exhilirating power!
" And truth atteſted, with delight intenſe,
" The ſerious charms of his colloquial ſenſe!
" His genius, that to wild luxuriance ſwell'd,
" His large, yet latent, charity excell'd:
" Want with ſuch true beneficence he chear'd,
" All that his bounty gave his zeal endear'd.

" Learning, as vaſt as mental power could ſeize,
" In ſport diſplaying and with grateful eaſe,
" Lightly the ſtage of chequer'd life he trod,
" Careleſs of chance, confiding in his God!

" This tomb may periſh, but not ſo his name
" Who ſhed new luſtre upon SHAKSPEARE's fame!"

Mr. Steevens to the proprietors of the preceding edition, in his life-time; with ſuch additions as, it is preſumed, he would have received, had he lived to determine on them himſelf. The whole was entruſted to the care of the preſent Editor, who has, with the aid of an able and vigilant aſſiſtant, and a careful printer, endeavoured to fulfil the truſt repoſed in him, as well as continued ill health and depreſſed ſpirits would permit.

By a memorandum in the hand-writing of Mr. Steevens it appeared to be his intention to adopt and introduce into the prolegomena of the preſent edition ſome parts of two late works of Mr. George Chalmers. An application was therefore made to that gentleman for his conſent, which was immediately granted; and to render the favour more acceptable, permiſſion was given to diveſt the extracts of the offenſive aſperities of controverſy.

The portrait of Shakſpeare prefixed to the preſent edition, is a copy of the picture formerly belonging to Mr. Felton, now to Alderman Boydell, and at preſent at the Shakſpeare Gallery, in Pall Mall. After what has been written on the ſubject it will be only neceſſary to add, that Mr. Steevens perſevered in his opinion that this, of all the portraits, had the faireſt chance of being a genuine likeneſs of the author. Of the canvas Chandois picture he

remained convinced that it poſſeſſed no claims to authenticity.

Some apology is due to thoſe gentlemen who, during the courſe of the publication, have obligingly offered the preſent Editor their aſſiſtance, which he ſhould thankfully have received, had he conſidered himſelf at liberty to accept their favours. He was fearful of loading the page, which Mr. Steevens in ſome inſtances thought too much crouded already, and therefore confined himſelf to the copy left to his care by his deceaſed friend.

But it is time to conclude.—He will therefore detain the reader no longer than juſt to offer a few words in extenuation of any errors or omiſſions that may be diſcovered in his part of the work; a work which, notwithſtanding the utmoſt exertion of diligence, has never been produced without ſome imperfection. Circumſtanced as he has been, he is ſenſible how inadequate his powers were to the taſk impoſed on him, and hopes for the indulgence of the reader. He feels that "the inaudible and noiſeleſs foot of time" has inſenſibly brought on that period of life and thoſe attendant infirmities which weaken the attachment to early purſuits, and diminiſh their importance;

"Superfluous lags the veteran on the ſtage."

To the admonition he is content to pay obedience;

and ſatisfied that the hour is arrived when "well-timed retreat" is the meaſure which prudence dictates, and reaſon will approve, he here bids adieu to SHAKSPEARE, and his Commentators; acknowledging the candour with which very imperfect efforts have been received, and wiſhing for his ſucceſſors the ſame gratification he has experienced in his humble endeavours to illuſtrate the greateſt poet the world ever knew.

ISAAC REED.

Staple Inn,
May 2, 1803.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"WHEN I ſaid I would die a bachelor, (cries Benedick,) I did not think I ſhould live till I were married." The preſent Editor of *Shakſpeare* may urge a kindred apology in defence of an opinion hazarded in his Prefatory Advertiſement; for when he declared his disbelief in the exiſtence of a genuine likeneſs of our great Dramatick Writer, he moſt certainly did not ſuppoſe any Portrait of that deſcription could have occurred, and much leſs that he himſelf ſhould have been inſtrumental in producing it.[1] He is happy, however, to find he was miſtaken in both his ſuppoſitions; and conſequently has done his utmoſt to promote the appearance of an accurate and finiſhed Engraving, from a Picture which had been unfaithfully as well as poorly imitated by *Droeſhout* and *Marſhall*.[2]

[1] See Mr. Richardſon's Propoſals, p. 4.

[2] "*Martin Droeſhout*. One of the indifferent engravers of the laſt century. He reſided in England, and was employed by the bookſellers. His portraits, which are the beſt part of his works, have nothing but their ſcarcity to recommend them. He engraved the head of *Shakſpeare*, *John Fox*, the martyrologiſt, *John Howſon*, Biſhop of Durham," &c.

Strutt's *Dictionary of Engravers*, Vol. I. p. 264.

"*William Marſhall*. He was one of thoſe laborious artiſts whoſe engravings were chiefly confined to the ornamenting of books. And indeed his patience and aſſiduity is all we can admire when we turn over his prints, which are prodigiouſly numerous. He worked with the graver only, but in a dry taſteleſs ſtyle; and from the ſimilarity which appears in the deſign of all his portraits, it is *ſuppoſed* that he worked from his own drawings

Of the character repeatedly and deliberately beſtowed by the ſame Editor on the firſt of theſe old engravers, not a ſingle word will be retracted; for, if the judgment of experienced artiſts be of any value, the plate by Droeſhout now under conſideration has (in one inſtance at leaſt) eſtabliſhed his claim to the title of "a moſt abominable imitator of humanity."

Mr. *Fuſeli* has pronounced, that the Portrait deſcribed in the Propoſals of Mr. *Richardſon*, was the work of a Flemiſh hand. It may alſo be obſerved, that the verſes in praiſe of *Droeſhout's* performance, were probably written as ſoon as they were beſpoke, and before their author had found opportunity or inclination to compare the plate with its original. He might previouſly have known that the picture conveyed a juſt reſemblance of Shakſpeare; took it for granted that the copy would be exact; and, therefore, raſhly aſſigned to the engraver a panegyrick which the painter had more immediately deſerved. It is lucky indeed for thoſe to whom metrical recommendations are neceſſary, that cuſtom does not require they ſhould be delivered upon oath.

It is likewiſe probable that *Ben Jonſon* had no intimate acquaintance with the graphick art, and might not have been over-ſolicitous about the ſtyle in which *Shakſpeare's* lineaments were tranſmitted to poſterity.

G. S.

after the life, though he did not add the words *ad vivum*, as was common upon ſuch occaſions. But if we grant this to be the caſe, the artiſt will acquire very little additional honour upon that account; for there is full as great a want of taſte manifeſt in the deſign, as in the execution of his works on copper." &c. *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 125.

N. B. The character of Shakſpeare as a poet; the condition of the ancient copies of his plays; the merits of his reſpective editors, &c. &c. have been ſo minutely inveſtigated on former occaſions, that any freſh advertiſement of ſimilar tendency might be conſidered as a tax on the reader's patience.

It may be proper indeed to obſerve, that the errors we have diſcovered in our laſt edition are here corrected; and that ſome explanations, &c. which ſeemed to be wanting, have likewiſe been ſupplied.

To theſe improvements it is now become our duty to add the genuine Portrait of our author. For a particular account of the diſcovery of it, we muſt again refer to the Propoſals of Mr. Richardſon,[3] at whoſe expence two engravings from it have been already made.

We are happy to ſubjoin, that Meſſieurs Boydell, who have reſolved to decorate their magnificent edition of Shakſpeare with a copy from the ſame original picture lately purchaſed by them from Mr. Felton, have not only favoured us with the uſe of it, but moſt obligingly took care, by their own immediate ſuperintendance, that as much juſtice ſhould be done to our engraving, as to their own.

[3] See p. 4.

PREFACE

TO

MR. RICHARDSON'S PROPOSALS, &c.

1794.

BEFORE the patronage of the publick is ſolicited in favour of a new engraving from the *only genuine portrait of Shakſpeare*, it is proper that every circumſtance relative to the diſcovery of it ſhould be faithfully and circumſtantially related.

On Friday, Auguſt 9, Mr. Richardſon, printſeller, of Caſtle Street, Leiceſter Square, aſſured Mr. Steevens that, in the courſe of buſineſs having recently waited on Mr. Felton, of Curzon Street, May Fair, this gentleman ſhowed him an ancient head reſembling the portrait of Shakſpeare as engraved by Martin Droeſhout in 1623.

Having frequently been misled by ſimilar reports founded on inaccuracy of obſervation or uncertainty of recollection, Mr. Steevens was deſirous to ſee the Portrait itſelf, that the authenticity of it might be aſcertained by a deliberate compariſon with Droeſhout's performance. Mr. Felton, in the moſt obliging and liberal manner, permitted Mr. Richardſon to bring the head, frame and all, away with him; and ſeveral unqueſtionable judges have concurred in pronouncing that the plate of Droeſhout conveys not only a general likeneſs of its original, but an exact and particular one as far as this artiſt

had ability to execute his undertaking. Droeſhout could follow the outlines of a face with tolerable accuracy,[4] but uſually left them as hard as if hewn out of a rock. Thus, in the preſent inſtance, he has ſervilely transferred the features of Shakſpeare from the painting to the copper, omitting every trait of the mild and benevolent character which his portrait ſo decidedly affords.—There are, indeed, juſt ſuch marks of a placid and amiable diſpoſition in this reſemblance of our poet, as his admirers would have wiſhed to find.

This Portrait is not painted on *canvas*, like the Chandos Head,[5] but on *wood*. Little more of it

[4] Of ſome volunteer infidelities, however, Droeſhout may be convicted. It is evident from the picture that Shakſpeare was partly bald, and conſequently that his forehead appeared unuſually high. To remedy, therefore, what ſeemed a defect to the engraver, he has amplified the brow on the right ſide. For the ſake of a more pictureſque effect, he has alſo incurvated the line in the fore part of the ruff, though in the original it is mathematically ſtraight. See note 9, p. 6.

It may be obſerved, however, to thoſe who examine trifles with rigour, that our early-engraved portraits were produced in the age when few had ſkill or opportunity to aſcertain their faithfulneſs or infidelity. The confident artiſt therefore aſſumed the liberty of altering where he thought he could improve. The rapid workman was in too much haſte to give his outline with correctneſs; and the mere drudge in his profeſſion contented himſelf by placing a *caput mortuum* of his original before the publick. In ſhort, the inducements to be licentious or inaccurate, were numerous; and the rewards of exactneſs were ſeldom attainable, moſt of our ancient heads of authors being done, at ſtated prices, for bookſellers, who were careleſs about the veriſimilitude of engravings which faſhion not unfrequently obliged them to inſert in the title-pages of works that deſerved no ſuch expenſive decorations.

[5] A living artiſt, who was apprentice to Roubiliac, declares that when that elegant ſtatuary undertook to execute the figure of Shakſpeare for Mr. Garrick, the Chandos picture was borrowed; but that it was, even then, regarded as a performance

than the entire countenance and part of the ruff is left; for the pannel having been ſplit off on one ſide, the reſt was curtailed and adapted to a ſmall frame.[6] On the back of it is the following inſcription, written in a very old hand: "Guil. Shakſpeare,[7] 1597.[8] R. N." Whether theſe initials belong to the painter, or a former owner of the picture, is uncertain. It is clear, however, that this is the identical head from which not only the engraving by Droeſhout in 1623, but that of Marſhall[9] in 1640 was made; and though the hazards our

of ſuſpicious aſpect; though for want of a more authentick archetype, ſome few hints were received, or pretended to be received, from it.

Roubiliac, towards the cloſe of his life, amuſed himſelf by painting in oil, though with little ſucceſs. Mr. Felton has his poor copy of the Chandos picture, in which our author exhibits the complexion of a Jew, or rather that of a chimney-ſweeper in the jaundice.

It is ſingular that neither Garrick, or his friends, ſhould have deſired Roubiliac at leaſt to look at the two earlieſt prints of Shakſpeare; and yet even Scheemaker is known to have had no other model for our author's head, than the mezzotinto by Zouſt.

[6] A broker now in the Minories declares, that it is his uſual practice to cut down ſuch portraits, as are painted on wood, to the ſize of ſuch ſpare frames as he happens to have in his poſſeſſion.

[7] It is obſervable, that this hand-writing is of the age of Elizabeth, and that the name of Shakſpeare is ſet down as he himſelf has ſpelt it.

[8] The age of the perſon repreſented agrees with the date on the back of the picture. In 1597 our author was in his 33d year, and in the meridian of his reputation, a period at which his reſemblance was moſt likely to have been ſecured.

[9] It has hitherto been ſuppoſed that Marſhall's production was borrowed from that of his predeceſſor. But it is now manifeſt that he has given the very ſingular ruff of Shakſpeare as it ſtands in the original picture, and not as it appears in the plate from it by Martin Droeſhout.

author's likeneſs was expoſed to, may have been numerous, it is ſtill in good preſervation.

But, as further particulars may be wiſhed for, it ſhould be ſubjoined, that in the Catalogue of "The fourth Exhibition and Sale by private Contract at the European Muſeum, King Street, St. James's Square, 1792," this picture was announced to the publick in the following words:

"No. 359. A curious portrait of Shakſpeare, painted in 1597."

On the 31ſt of May, 1792, Mr. Felton bought it for five guineas; and afterwards urging ſome inquiry concerning the place it came from, Mr. Wilſon, the conductor of the Muſeum already mentioned, wrote to him as follows:

"To Mr. S. Felton, Drayton, Shropſhire.

"SIR,

"——The Head of Shakeſpeare was purchaſed out of an old houſe known by the ſign of the Boar in Eaſtcheap, London, where Shakeſpeare and his friends uſed to reſort,—and report ſays, was painted by a Player of that time,[1] but whoſe name I have not been able to learn.——

"I am, Sir, with great regard,

"Your moſt obed^{t}. ſervant,

"Sept. 11, 1792." "J. Wilſon."

[1] The player alluded to was Richard Burbage.

A Gentleman who, for ſeveral years paſt, has collected as many pictures of Shakſpeare as he could hear of, (in the hope that he might at laſt procure a genuine one,) declares that the

Auguſt 11, 1794, Mr. Wilſon aſſured Mr. Steevens, that this portrait was found between four and five years ago at a broker's ſhop in the Minories, by a man of faſhion, whoſe name muſt be concealed: that it afterwards came (attended by the Eaſtcheap ſtory, &c.) with a part of that gentleman's collection of paintings, to be ſold at the European Muſeum, and was exhibited there for about three months, during which time it was ſeen by Lord Leiceſter and Lord Orford, who both allowed it to be a genuine picture of Shakſpeare.—It is natural to ſuppoſe that the mutilated ſtate of it prevented either of their Lordſhips from becoming its purchaſer.

How far the report on which Mr. Wilſon's narratives (reſpecting the place where this picture was met with, &c.) were built, can be verified by evidence at preſent within reach, is quite immaterial, as our great dramatick author's portrait diſplays indubitable marks of its own authenticity. It is apparently not the work of an amateur, but of an artiſt by profeſſion; and therefore could hardly have been the production of Burbage, the principal actor of his time, who (though he certainly handled the pencil) muſt have had inſufficient leiſure to perfect himſelf in oil-painting, which was then ſo little underſtood and practiſed by the natives of this kingdom.[2]

Eaſtcheap legend has accompanied the majority of them, from whatever quarter they were tranſmitted.

It is therefore high time that picture-dealers ſhould avail themſelves of another ſtory, this being completely worn out, and no longer fit for ſervice.

[2] Much confidence, perhaps, ought not to be placed in this remark, as a ſucceſſion of limners now unknown might have purſued their art in England from the time of Hans Holbein to that of Queen Elizabeth.

Yet, by thoſe who allow to poſſibilities the influence of facts, it may be ſaid that this picture was probably the ornament of a club-room in Eaſtcheap, round which other reſemblances of contemporary poets and players might have been arranged:—that the Boar's Head, the ſcene of Falſtaff's jollity, might alſo have been the favourite tavern of Shakſpeare:—that, when our author returned over London Bridge from the Globe theatre, this was a convenient houſe of entertainment; and that for many years afterwards (as the tradition of the neighbourhood reports) it was underſtood to have been a place where the wits and wags of a former age were aſſembled, and their portraits repoſited. To ſuch ſuppoſitions it may be replied, that Mr. Sloman, who quitted this celebrated publick houſe in 1767, (when all its furniture, *which had devolved to him from his two immediate predeceſſors*, was ſold off,) declared his utter ignorance of any picture on the premiſes, except a coarſe daubing of the Gadshill *robbery*.[3] From

[3] Philip Jones of Barnard's Inn, the auctioneer who ſold off Mr. Sloman's effects, has been ſought for; but he died a few years ago. Otherwiſe, as the knights of the hammer are ſaid to preſerve the catalogue of every auction, it might have been known whether pictures conſtituted any part of the Boar's Head furniture; for Mr. Sloman himſelf could not affirm that there were no ſmall or obſcure paintings above ſtairs in apartments which he had ſeldom or ever occaſion to viſit.

Mrs. Brinn, the widow of Mr. Sloman's predeceſſor, after her huſband's deceaſe quitted Eaſtcheap, took up the trade of a wire-worker, and lived in Crooked Lane. She died about ten years ago. One, who had been her apprentice (no youth,) declares ſhe was a very particular woman, was circumſtantial in her narratives, and ſo often repeated them, that he could not poſſibly forget any article ſhe had communicated relative to the plate, furniture, &c. of the Boar's Head:—that ſhe often ſpoke of the painting that repreſented the robbery at Gadshill, but never ſo much as hinted at any other pictures in the houſe; and had there been any, he is ſure ſhe would not have failed to deſcribe them

hence the following probabilities may be ſuggeſted: —firſt, that if Shakſpeare's portrait was ever at the Boar's Head, it had been alienated before the fire of London in 1666, when the original houſe was burnt;—and, ſecondly, that the path through which the ſame picture has travelled ſince, is as little to be determined as the courſe of a ſubterraneous ſtream.

It may alſo be remarked, that if ſuch a Portrait had exiſted in Eaſtcheap during the life of the induſtrious Vertue,[4] he would moſt certainly have procured it, inſtead of having ſubmitted to take his firſt engraving of our author from a juvenile likeneſs of James I. and his laſt from Mr. Keck's unauthenticated purchaſe out of the dreſſing-room of a modern actreſs.

It is obvious, therefore, from the joint depoſitions of Mr. Wilſon and Mr. Sloman, that an inference diſadvantageous to the authenticity of the Boar's Head ſtory muſt be drawn; for if the portrait in queſtion arrived after a ſilent progreſs through obſcurity, at the ſhop of a broker who, being ignorant of its value, ſold it for a few ſhillings, it muſt neceſſarily have been unattended by any hiſtory whatever. And if it was purchaſed at a ſale of goods at the Boar's Head, as neither the maſter of the houſe, or his two predeceſſors, had the leaſt idea of having poſſeſſed ſuch a curioſity, no intelligence could be ſent abroad with

in her accounts of her former buſineſs and place of abode, which ſupplied her with materials for converſation to the very end of a long life.

[4] The four laſt publicans who kept this tavern are ſaid to have filled the whole period, from the time of Vertue's inquiries, to the year 1788, when the Boar's Head, having been untenanted for five years, was converted into two dwellings for ſhopkeepers.

it from that quarter. In either caſe then we may ſuppoſe, that the legend relative to the name of its painter,[5] and the place where it was found, (notwithſtanding both theſe particulars *might* be true,) were at hazard appended to the portrait under conſideration, as ſoon as its ſimilitude to Shakſpeare had been acknowledged, and his name diſcovered on the back of it.—This circumſtance, however, cannot affect the credit of the picture; for (as the late Lord Mansfield obſerved in the Douglas controverſy) "there are inſtances in which falſhood has been employed in ſupport of a real fact, and that it is no uncommon thing for a man to defend a true cauſe by fabulous pretences."

That Shakſpeare's family poſſeſſed no reſemblance of him, there is ſufficient reaſon to believe. Where then was this faſhionable and therefore neceſſary adjunct to his works to be ſought for? If any where, in London, the theatre of his fame and fortune, and the only place where painters, at that period, could have expected to thrive by their profeſſion. We may ſuppoſe too, that the bookſellers who employed Droeſhout, diſcovered the object of their reſearch by the direction of Ben Jonſon,[6] who in the following lines has borne the moſt ample teſtimony to the veriſimilitude of a portrait which will now be recommended, by a more accurate and finiſhed engraving, to the publick notice:

[5] The tradition that Burbage painted a likeneſs of Shakſpeare, has been current in the world ever ſince the appearance of Mr. Granger's *Biographical Hiſtory*.

[6] It is not improbable that Ben Jonſon furniſhed the Dedication and Introduction to the firſt folio, as well as the Commendatory Verſes prefixed to it.

" The figure, that thou here ſeeſt put,
" It was for gentle Shakeſpeare cut;
" Wherein the graver had a ſtrife
" With Nature, to outdoo the life:
" O, could he but have drawne his wit
" As well in braſſe, as he hath hit
" His face;[7] the print would then ſurpaſſe
" All that was ever writ in braſſe.
" But, ſince he cannot, Reader, looke
" Not on his picture, but his Booke."

That the legitimate reſemblance of ſuch a man has been indebted to chance for its preſervation, would excite greater aſtoniſhment, were it not recollected, that a portrait of him has lately become an object of far higher conſequence and eſtimation than it was during the period he flouriſhed in, and the twenty years ſucceeding it; for the profeſſion of a player was ſcarcely then allowed to be reputable. This remark, however, ought not to ſtand unſupported by a paſſage in *The Microcoſmos* of John Davies of Hereford, 4to. 1605, p. 215, where, after having indulged himſelf in a long and ſevere ſtrain of ſatire on the vanity and affectation of the actors of his age, he ſubjoins—

[7] ——————— *as he hath hit*
His face;] It ſhould ſeem from theſe words, that the plate prefixed to the folio 1623 exhibited ſuch a likeneſs of Shakſpeare as ſatisfied the eye of his contemporary, Ben Jonſon, who, on an occaſion like this, would hardly have ventured to aſſert what it was in the power of many of his readers to contradict. When will evidence half ſo concluſive be produced in favour of the Davchantico-Bettertonian-Barryan-Keckian-Nicolſian-Chandoſan *canvas*, which bears not the ſlighteſt reſemblance to the original of Droeſhout's and Marſhall's engraving?

" Players, I loue yee and your qualitie,
" As ye are men that paſs time not abus'd:
" And ſome I loue for *painting, poeſie,** *" W. S. R. B."
" And ſay fell fortune cannot be excus'd,
" That hath for better uſes you refus'd:
" Wit, courage, good ſhape, good partes, are all good,
" As long as all theſe goods are no worſe us'd;[8]
" And though *the ſtage doth ſtaine pure gentle bloud,*
" Yet generous yee are in minde and moode."

The reader will obſerve from the initials in the margin of the third of theſe wretched lines, that W. Shakſpeare was here alluded to as the *poet*, and R. Burbage as the *painter*.

Yet notwithſtanding this compliment to the higher excellencies of our author, it is almoſt certain that his reſemblance owes its preſent ſafety to the ſhelter of a ſeries of garrets and lumber-rooms, in which it had ſculked till it found its way into the broker's ſhop from whence the diſcernment of a modern connoiſſeur ſo luckily redeemed it.

It may alſo be obſerved, that an excellent original of Ben Jonſon was lately bought at an obſcure auction by Mr. Ritſon of Gray's Inn, and might once have been companion to the portrait of Shakſpeare thus fortunately reſtored, after having been loſt to the publick for a century and a half. They are, nevertheleſs, performances by very different artiſts. The face of Shakſpeare was imitated by a delicate pencil, that of Jonſon by a bolder hand. It is not deſigned, however, to appretiate the diſtinct value of theſe pictures; though it muſt be allowed (as ſeveral undoubted originals of old Ben are extant)

[8] ——————— *are all good,*
As long as all theſe goods are no worſe us'd;] So, in our author's *Othello:*
" Where virtue is, theſe are moſt virtuous."

that an authentick head of Shakſpeare is the greater deſideratum.

To conclude—thoſe who aſſume the liberty of deſpiſing prints when moderately executed, may be taught by this example the uſe and value of them; ſince to a coarſe engraving by a ſecond-rate artiſt,[9] the publick is indebted for the recovery of the only genuine portrait of its favourite *Shakſpeare.*

PROPOSALS

BY

WILLIAM RICHARDSON,

PRINTSELLER, CASTLE STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE,

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF

TWO PLATES

FROM THE PICTURE ALREADY DESCRIBED.

THESE Plates are to be engraved of an octavo ſize, and in the moſt finiſhed ſtyle, by T. Trotter. A fac-ſimile of the hand-writing, date, &c. at the

[9] There is reaſon to believe that Shakſpeare's is the earlieſt known portrait of Droeſhout's engraving. No wonder then that his performances twenty years after, are found to be executed with a ſomewhat ſuperior degree of ſkill and accuracy. Yet ſtill he was a poor engraver, and his productions are ſought for more on account of their ſcarcity than their beauty. He ſeems indeed to have pleaſed ſo little in this country, that there are not above ſix or ſeven heads of his workmanſhip to be found.

back of the picture, will be given at the bottom of one of them.

They will be impreſſed both on octavo and quarto paper, ſo as to ſuit the beſt editions of the plays of Shakſpeare.

Price of the pair to Subſcribers 7s. 6d. No Proofs will be taken off. Non-ſubſcribers 10s. 6d.

The money to be paid at the time of ſubſcribing, or at the delivery of the prints, which will be ready on December 1ſt, 1794.

Such portions of the hair, ruff, and drapery, as are wanting in the original picture, will be ſupplied from Droeſhout's and Marſhall's copies of it, in which the inanimate part of the compoſition may be ſafely followed. The mere outline in half of the plate that accompanies the finiſhed one, will ſerve to aſcertain how far theſe ſupplements have been adopted. To ſuch ſcrupulous fidelity the publick (which has long been amuſed by inadequate or ideal likeneſſes of Shakſpeare) has an undoubted claim; and ſhould any fine ladies and gentlemen of the preſent age be diſguſted at the ſtiff garb of our author, they may readily turn their eyes aſide, and feaſt them on the more eaſy and elegant ſuit of clothes provided for him by his modern tailors, Meſſieurs Zouſt, Vertue, Houbraken, and the humble imitators of their ſuppoſititious drapery.

The dreſs that Shakſpeare wears in this ancient picture, *might* have been a theatrical one; as in the courſe of obſervation ſuch another habit has not occurred. Marſhall, when he engraved from the ſame portrait, materially altered its paraphernalia, and, perhaps, becauſe he thought a ſtage garb did not ſtand ſo characteriſtically before a volume of Poems as before a collection of Plays; and yet it muſt be confeſſed, that this change might have been intro-

duced for no other reaſon than more effectually to diſcriminate his own production from that of his predeceſſor. On the ſame account alſo he might have reverſed the figure.

N. B. The plates to be delivered in the order they are ſubſcribed for; and ſubſcriptions received at Mr. Richardſon's, where the original portrait (by permiſſion of Samuel Felton, Eſq.) will be exhibited for the inſpection of ſubſcribers, together with the earlier engravings from it by Droeſhout in 1623, and Marſhall in 1640.[1]

WILLIAM RICHARDSON.

Caſtle Street, Leiceſter Square,
Nov. 5, 1794.

[1] It is common for an artiſt who engraves from a painting that has been already engraved, to place the work of his predeceſſor before him, that he may either catch ſome hints from it, or learn to avoid its errors. Marſhall moſt certainly did ſo in the preſent inſtance; but while he corrected Droeſhout's ruff, he has been led by him to deſert his original in an unauthoriſed expanſion of our author's forehead.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

PROPOSALS OF MR. RICHARDSON.

WHEN the newly diſcovered Portrait of our great Dramatick Writer was firſt ſhown in Caſtle Street, the few remaining advocates for the *Chandoſan* canvas obſerved, that its unwelcome rival exhibited not a ſingle trait of Shakſpeare. But, all on a ſudden, theſe criticks have ſhifted their ground; and the repreſentation originally pronounced to have been ſo unlike our author, is ſince declared to be an immediate copy from the print by Martin Droeſhout.

But by what means are ſuch direct contrarieties of opinion to be reconciled? If no veſtige of the Poet's features was diſcernible in the Picture, how is it proved to be a copy from an engraving by which alone thoſe features can be aſcertained? No man will aſſert one thing to have been imitated from another, without allowing that there is ſome unequivocal and determined ſimilitude between the objects compared.—The truth is, that the firſt point of objection to this unexpected Portrait was ſoon overpowered by a general ſuffrage in its favour. A ſecond attack was therefore hazarded, and has yet more lamentably failed.

As a further note of the originality of the Head belonging to Mr. Felton, it may be urged, that the artiſt who had ability to produce ſuch a delicate and

finiſhed Portrait, could moſt certainly have made an exact copy from a very coarſe print, provided he had not diſdained ſo ſervile an occupation. On the contrary, a rude engraver like Droeſhout, would neceſſarily have failed in his attempt to expreſs the gentler graces of ſo delicate a picture. Our ancient handlers of the burin were often faithleſs to the character of their originals; and it is conceived that ſome other performances by Droeſhout will furniſh no exception to this remark.

Such defective imitations, however, even at this period, are ſufficiently common. Several prints from well-known portraits of Sir Joſhua Reynolds and Mr. Romney, are rendered worthleſs by ſimilar infidelities; for notwithſtanding theſe mezzotints preſerve the outlines and general effect of their originals, the appropriate characters of them are as entirely loſt as that of Shakſpeare under the hand of Droeſhout.—Becauſe, therefore, an engraving has only a partial reſemblance to its archetype, are we at liberty to pronounce that the one could not have been taken from the other?

It may alſo be obſerved, that if Droeſhout's plate had been followed by the painter, the line in front of the ruff would have been incurvated, and not have appeared ſtraight, as it is in the ſmaller print by Marſhall from the ſame picture. In antiquated Engliſh portraits, examples of rectilineal ruffs are familiar; but where will be found ſuch another as the German has placed under the chin of his metamorphoſed poet? From its pointed corners, reſembling the wings of a bat, which are conſtant indications of miſchievous agency, the engraver's ruff would have accorded better with the purſuits of his necromantick countryman, the celebrated *Doctor Fauſtus.*

In the mean while it is aſſerted by every adequate judge, that the coincidences between the picture and the print under conſideration, are too ſtrong and too numerous to have been the effects of chance. And yet the period at which this likeneſs of our author muſt have been produced, affords no evidence that any one of our early limners had condeſcended to borrow the general outline and diſpoſition of his portraits from the taſteleſs heads prefixed to volumes iſſued out by bookſellers. The artiſt, indeed, who could have filched from Droeſhout, like Bardolph, might have "ſtolen a lute-caſe, carried it twelve leagues, and ſold it for three halfpence."

But were the print allowed to be the original, and the painting a mere copy from it, the admiſſion of this fact would militate in full force againſt the authenticity of every other anonymous and undated portrait from which a wretched old engraving had been made; as it would always enable cavillers to aſſert, that the painting was ſubſequent to the print, and not the print to the painting. True judges, however, would ſeldom fail to determine, (as they have in the preſent inſtance,) whether a painting was coldly imitated from a lumpiſh copper-plate, or taken warm from animated nature.

For the diſcuſſion of ſubjects like theſe, an eye habituated to minute compariſon, and attentive to peculiarities that elude the notice of unqualified obſervers, is alſo required. Shakſpeare's countenance deformed by Droeſhout, reſembles the ſign of Sir Roger de Coverley, when it had been changed into a Saracen's head; on which occaſion the Spectator obſerves, that the features of the gentle Knight were ſtill apparent through the lineaments of the ferocious Muſſulman.

That the leading thought in the verſes annexed

to the plate by Droeſhout is hackned and common, will moſt readily be allowed; and this obſervation would have carried weight with it, had the lines in queſtion been anonymous. But the ſubſcription of Ben Jonſon's name was a circumſtance that rendered him immediately reſponſible for the propriety of an encomium which, however open to diſpute, appears to have eſcaped contradiction, either metrical or proſaick, from the ſurviving friends of Shakſpeare.

But, another miſrepreſentation, though an involuntary one, and of more recent date, ſhould not be overlooked.

In the matter prefatory to W. Richardſon's Propoſals, the plate by Vertue from Mr. Keck's (now the *Chandos*) picture, is ſaid to have ſucceeded the engraving before Mr. Pope's edition of Shakſpeare, in ſix volumes quarto.[2] But the contrary is the fact; and how is this circumſtance to be accounted for? If in 1719 Vertue ſuppoſed the head which he afterwards admitted into his Set of Poets, was a genuine repreſentation, how happened it that his next engraving of the ſame author, in 1725, was taken from quite a different painting, in the collection of the Earl of Oxford? Did the artiſt, in this inſtance, direct the judgment of his Lordſhip and Mr. Pope? or did their joint opinion over-rule that of the artiſt? Theſe portraits, being wholly unlike each other, could not (were the ſlighteſt degree of reſpect due to either of them) be *both* received as legitimate repreſentations of Shakſpeare.—Perhaps, Vertue (who is deſcribed by Lord Orford as a lover of truth,) be-

[2] This miſtake originated from a paſſage in Lord Orford's *Anecdotes*, &c. 8vo. Vol. V. p. 258, where it is ſaid, and truly, that Vertue's Set of Poets appeared in 1730. The particular plate of Shakſpeare, however, as is proved by a date at the bottom of it, was engraved in 1719.

gan to doubt the authenticity of the picture from which his firſt engraving had been made, and was therefore eaſily perſuaded to expend his art on another portrait, the ſpurioufneſs of which (to himſelf at leaſt) was not quite ſo evident as that of its predeceſſor.

The publick, for many years paſt, has been familiarized to a *Vandykiſh* head of Shakſpeare, introduced by *Simon's* mezzotinto from a painting by Zouſt. Hence the countenance of our author's monumental effigy at Weſtminſter was modelled; and a kindred repreſentation of him has been given by Roubiliac. Such is ſtill the Shakſpeare that decorates our libraries, and ſeals our letters. But, *ætatis cujuſque notandi ſunt tibi mores.* On a little reflection it might have occurred, that the cavalier turn of head adopted from the gallant partizans of Charles I. afforded no juſt reſemblance of the ſober and chaſtiſed countenances predominating in the age of Elizabeth, during which our poet flouriſhed, though he ſurvived till James, for about thirteen years, had diſgraced the throne.—The foregoing hint may be purſued by the judicious examiner, who will take the trouble to compare the looks and air of Shakſpeare's contemporaries with the modern ſculptures, &c. deſigned to perpetuate his image. The reader may then draw an obvious inference from theſe premiſes; and conclude, that the portrait lately exhibited to the publick is not ſuppoſititious becauſe it preſents a leſs ſpritely and confident aſſemblage of features than had uſually been imputed to the modeſt and unaſſuming parent of the Britiſh theatre.—It is certain, that neither the *Zouſtian* or *Chandoſian canvas* has diſplayed the leaſt trait of a *quiet* and *gentle* bard of the *Elizabethan* age.

To aſcertain the original owner of the portrait

now Mr. Felton's, is an undertaking difficult enough; and yet conjecture may occaſionally be ſent out on a more hopeleſs errand.

The old pictures at Tichfield Houſe, as part of the Wriotheſley property, were divided, not many years ago, between the Dukes of Portland and Beaufort. Some of theſe paintings that were in good condition were removed to Bulſtrode, where two portraits[3] of Shakſpeare's Earl of Southampton are ſtill preſerved. What became of other heads which time or accident had impaired, and at what period the remains of the furniture, &c. of his Lordſhip's venerable manſion were ſold off and diſperſed, it may be fruitleſs to enquire.

Yet, as the likeneſs of our author lately redeemed from obſcurity was the work of ſome eminent Flemiſh artiſt, it was probably painted for a perſonage of diſtinction, and might therefore have belonged to the celebrated Earl whom Shakſpeare had previouſly complimented by the dedication of his *Venus and Adonis*. Surely, it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that a reſemblance of our excellent dramatick poet might have been found in the houſe of a nobleman who is reported to have loved him well enough to have preſented him with a thouſand pounds.

To conclude—the names[4] which have honoured

[3] One of theſe portraits, is on *canvas*, and therefore the genuineneſs of it is controverted, if not denied.

[4] In the numerous Liſt of Gentlemen who thoroughly examined this original Picture, were convinced of its authenticity, and immediately became Subſcribers to W. Richardſon, are the names of—Dr. Farmer, Mr. Cracherode, Mr. Bindley, Sir Joſeph Banks, Sir George Shuckburgh, Mr. Chalmers, Mr. Reed, Mr. Ritſon, Mr. Douce, Mr. Markham, Mr. Weſton, Mr. Lyſons, Mr. James, Col. Stanley, Mr. Combe, Mr. Lodge, Meſſ. Smith, ſen. and jun. Mr. Nicol, Mr. Boaden, Mr. Pearce, Mr.

the ſubſcription for an engraving from this new-found portrait of Shakſpeare, muſt be allowed to furniſh the moſt deciſive eſtimate of its value.

[☞ *Since the foregoing Paper was received, we have been authorized to inform the Publick, that Meſſieurs* Boydell *and* Nicol *are ſo thoroughly convinced of the genuineneſs of* Mr. Felton's Shakſpeare, *that they are determined to engrave it as a Frontiſpiece to their ſplendid Edition of our Author, inſtead of having recourſe to the exploded Picture inherited by the* Chandos *Family.*]

From the *European Magazine*, for December, 1794.

Whitefoord, Mr. Thane, Meſſ. Boydell, Mr. G. Romney, Mr. Lawrence, (Portrait-painter to his Majeſty,) Mr. Boywer, (Miniature-painter to his Majeſty,) Mr. Barry, R. A. (Profeſſor of Painting,) &c. &c. &c.

The following pages, on account of their connection with the ſubject of Mr. Richardſon's Remarks, are ſuffered to ſtand as in our laſt edition.

ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO EDITION 1793.

THE reader may obſerve that, contrary to former uſage, no head of Shakſpeare is prefixed to the preſent edition of his plays. The undiſguiſed fact is this. The only portrait of him that even pretends to authenticity, by means of injudicious cleaning, or ſome other accident, has become little better than the "ſhadow of a ſhade."[5] The late Sir Joſhua Reynolds indeed once ſuggeſted, that whatever perſon it was deſigned for, it might have been left, as it now appears, unfiniſhed. Various copies and plates, however, are ſaid at different times to have been made from it; but a regard for truth obliges us to confeſs that they are all unlike each other,[6] and convey no diſtinct reſemblance of the

[5] Such, we think, were the remarks, that occurred to us ſeveral years ago, when this portrait was acceſſible. We wiſhed indeed to have confirmed them by a ſecond view of it; but a late accident in the noble family to which it belongs, has precluded us from that ſatisfaction.

[6] Vertue's portraits have been over-praiſed on account of their fidelity; for we have now before us ſix different heads of Shakſpeare engraved by him, and do not ſcruple to aſſert that they have individually a different caſt of countenance. *Cucullus non facit monachum.* The ſhape of our author's ear-ring and falling-band may correſpond in them all, but where ſhall we find an equal conformity in his features?

Few objects indeed are occaſionally more difficult to ſeize, than the ſlender traits that mark the character of a face; and the

poor remains of their avowed original. Of the drapery and curling hair exhibited in the excellent engravings of Mr. Vertue, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Knight, the painting does not afford a veſtige; nor is there a feature or circumſtance on the whole canvas, that can with minute preciſion be delineated.—We muſt add, that on very vague and dubious authority this head has hitherto been received as a genuine portrait of our author, who probably left behind him no ſuch memorial of his face. As he was careleſs of the future ſtate of his works, his ſolicitude might not have extended to the perpetuation of his looks. Had any portrait of him exiſted, we may naturally ſuppoſe it muſt have belonged to his family, who (as Mark Antony ſays of a hair of Cæſar) would

" ——have mention'd it within their wills,
" Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
" Unto their iſſue;"

and were there ground for the report that Shakſpeare was the real father of Sir William D'Avenant, and that the picture already ſpoken of was painted for him, we might be tempted to obſerve with our author, that the

" ——————baſtard ſon
" Was kinder to his father, than his daughters
" Got 'twixt the natural ſheets."

But in ſupport of either ſuppoſition ſufficient evidence has not been produced. The former of theſe

eye will often detect the want of them, when the moſt exact mechanical proceſs cannot decide on the places in which they are omitted.—Vertue, in ſhort, though a laborious, was a very indifferent draughtſman, and his beſt copies too often exhibit a general inſtead of a particular reſemblance.

tales has no better foundation than the vanity of our *degener Neoptolemus*,[7] and the latter originates from modern conjecture. The preſent age will probably

[7] Nor does the ſame piece of ancient ſcandal derive much weight from Aubrey's adoption of it. The reader who is acquainted with the writings of this abſurd goſſip, will ſcarcely pay more attention to him on the preſent occaſion, than when he gravely aſſures us that "Anno 1670, not far from Cirencester was an apparition; being demanded whether a good ſpirit or a bad? returned no anſwer, but diſappeared *with a curious perfume and moſt melodious twang*. Mr. W. Lilly believes it was a fairy." See Aubrey's *Miſcellanies*, edit. 1784, p. 114.—Aubrey, in ſhort, was a dupe to every wag who choſe to practiſe on his credulity; and would moſt certainly have believed the perſon who ſhould have told him that Shakſpeare himſelf was a natural ſon of Queen Elizabeth.

An additional and no leſs pleaſant proof of Aubrey's cullibility, may be found at the concluſion of one of his own Letters to Mr. Ray; where, after the enumeration of ſeveral wonderful methods employed by old women and Iriſhmen to cure the gout, agues, and the bloody flux, he adds: "Sir Chriſtopher Wren told me once [*eating of ſtrawberrids*] that if one that has a wound in the head eats them, 'tis mortal."

See *Philoſophical Letters between the late learned Mr. Ray &c. Publiſhed by William Derham, Chaplain to his Royal Highneſs George Prince of Wales, & F. R. S.* 8vo. 1718, p. 251.

In the foregoing inſtance our letter-writer ſeems to have been perfectly unconſcious of the jocularity of Sir Chriſtopher, who would have meant nothing more by his remark, than to ſecure his ſtrawberries, at the expence of an alluſion to the crack in poor Aubrey's head. Thus when Falſtaff "did deſire to eat ſome prawns," Mrs. Quickly told him "they were ill for a green wound."

Mr. T. Warton has pleaſantly obſerved that he "cannot ſuppoſe Shakſpeare to have been the father of a Doctor of Divinity who never laughed;" and—to waſte no more words on Sir William D'Avenant,—let but our readers ſurvey his heavy, vulgar, unmeaning face, and, if we miſtake not, they will as readily conclude that Shakſpeare "never holp to make it." So deſpicable, indeed, is his countenance as repreſented by Faithorne, that it appears to have ſunk that celebrated engraver beneath many a common artiſt in the ſame line.

allow the vintner's ivy to Sir William, but with equal juſtice will withhold from him the poet's bays. —To his pretenſions of deſcent from Shakſpeare, one might almoſt be induced to apply a ludicrous paſſage uttered by Fielding's *Phaeton in the Suds*:

> " ——————— by all the pariſh boys I'm flamm'd:
> " You the SUN's *ſon*, you raſcal! you be d——d."

About the time when this picture found its way into Mr. Keck's hands, the verification of portraits was ſo little attended to, that both the Earl of Oxford, and Mr. Pope, admitted a juvenile one of King James I. as that of Shakſpeare.[8] Among the heads of illuſtrious perſons engraved by Houbraken, are ſeveral imaginary ones, beſide Ben Jonſon's and Otway's; and old Mr. Langford poſitively aſſerted that, in the ſame collection, the grandfather of Cock the auctioneer had the honour to perſonate the great and amiable Thurloe, ſecretary of ſtate to Oliver Cromwell.

From the price of forty guineas paid for the ſuppoſed portrait of our author to Mrs. Barry, the real value of it ſhould not be inferred. The poſſeſſion

[8] Much reſpect is due to the authority of portraits that deſcend in families from heir to heir; but little reliance can be placed on them when they are produced for ſale (as in the preſent inſtance) by alien hands, almoſt a century after the death of the perſon ſuppoſed to be repreſented; and then, (as Edmund ſays in *King Lear*) " come pat, like the cataſtrophe of the old comedy." Shakſpeare was buried in 1616; and in 1708 the firſt notice of this picture occurs. Where there is ſuch a chaſm in evidence, the validity of it may be not unfairly queſtioned, and eſpecially by thoſe who remember a ſpecies of fraudulence recorded in Mr. Foote's *Taſte*: " Clap Lord Dupe's arms on that half-length of Eraſmus; I have ſold it him as his great grandfather's third brother, for fifty guineas."

of ſomewhat more animated than canvas, might have been included, though not ſpecified, in a bargain with an actreſs of acknowledged gallantry.

Yet allowing this to be a mere fanciful inſinuation, a rich man does not eaſily miſs what he is ambitious to find. At leaſt he may be perſuaded he has found it, a circumſtance which, as far as it affects his own content, will anſwer, for a while, the ſame purpoſe. Thus the late Mr. Jennens, of Gopſal in Leiceſterſhire, for many years congratulated himſelf as owner of another genuine portrait of Shakſpeare, and by Cornelius Janſen; nor was diſpoſed to forgive the writer who obſerved that, being dated in 1610, it could not have been the work of an artiſt who never ſaw England till 1618, above a year after our author's death.

So ready, however, are intereſted people in aſſiſting credulous ones to impoſe on themſelves, that we will venture to predict,—if ſome opulent dupe to the flimſy artifice of Chatterton ſhould advertiſe a conſiderable ſum of money for a portrait of the Pſeudo-Rowley, ſuch a deſideratum would ſoon emerge from the tutelary crypts of St. Mary Redcliff at Briſtol, or a hitherto unheard of repoſitory in the tomb of Syr Thybbot Gorges at Wraxall.[1]

[1] A kindred trick had actually been paſſed off by Chatterton on the late Mr. Barrett of Briſtol, in whoſe back parlour was a pretended head of Canynge, moſt contemptibly ſcratched with a pen on a ſmall ſquare piece of yellow parchment, and framed and glazed as an authentick icon by the "curyous poyntill" of Rowley. But this ſame drawing very ſoon ceaſed to be ſtationary, was alternately exhibited and concealed, as the wavering faith of its poſſeſſor ſhifted about, and was prudently withheld at laſt from the publick eye. Why it was not inſerted in the late Hiſtory of Briſtol, as well as Rowley's plan and elevation of its ancient caſtle, (which all the rules of all the ages of architecture pronounce to be ſpurious) let the Rowleian advocates inform us.

It would alſo come atteſted as a ſtrong likeneſs of our archæological bard; on the faith of a parchment exhibiting the hand and ſeal of the *dygne Mayſter Wyllyam Canynge*, ſetting forth that *Mayſter Thomas Rowlie was ſo entyrely and paſsynge wele beloved* of himſelf, or our poetick knight, that one or the other *causyd hys ſemblaunce to be ryght conynglye depeyncten on a marveillouſe fayre table of wood, and enſevelyd wyth hym, that deth mote theym not clene departyn and putte aſunder.*—A ſimilar impoſition, however, would in vain be attempted on the editors of Shakſpeare, who, with all the zeal of Rowleians, are happily exempt from their credulity.

A former plate of our author, which was copied from Martin Droeſhout's in the title-page to the folio 1623, is worn out; nor does ſo "abominable an imitation of humanity" deſerve to be reſtored. The ſmaller head, prefixed to the Poems in 1640, is merely a reduced and reverſed copy by Marſhall from its predeceſſor, with a few ſlight changes in attitude and dreſs.—We boaſt therefore of no exterior ornaments,[2] except thoſe of better print and paper than have hitherto been allotted to any octavo edition of Shakſpeare.

We are happy at leaſt to have recollected a ſingle impoſition that was too groſs for even theſe gentlemen to ſwallow.—Mr. Barrett, however, in the year 1776, aſſured Mr. Tyrwhitt and Mr. Steevens, that he received the aforeſaid ſcrawl of Canynge from Chatterton, who deſcribed it as having been found in the prolific cheſt, ſecured by ſix, or ſix-and-twenty keys, no matter which.

[2] They who wiſh for decorations adapted to this edition of Shakſpeare, will find them in Silveſter Harding's Portraits and Views, &c. &c. (appropriated to the whole ſuite of our author's Hiſtorical Dramas, &c.) publiſhed in thirty numbers.

See *Gent. Mag.* June 1759, p. 257.

Juſtice nevertheleſs requires us to ſubjoin, that had an undoubted picture of our author been attainable, the Bookſellers would moſt readily have paid for the beſt engraving from it that could have been produced by the moſt ſkilful of our modern artiſts; but it is idle to be at the charge of perpetuating illuſions: and who ſhall offer to point out, among the numerous prints of Shakſpeare, any one that is more like him than the reſt?[5]

The play of *Pericles* has been added to this collection, by the advice of Dr. Farmer. To make room for it, *Titus Andronicus* might have been omitted; but our proprietors are of opinion that ſome ancient prejudices in its favour may ſtill exiſt, and for that reaſon only it is preſerved.

We have not reprinted the Sonnets, &c. of Shakſpeare, becauſe the ſtrongeſt act of parliament that could be framed would fail to compel readers into their ſervice; notwithſtanding theſe miſcellaneous poems have derived every poſſible advantage from the literature and judgment of their only intelligent editor, Mr. Malone, whoſe implements of criticiſm,

[5] Liſt of the different engravings from the Chandoſan Shakſpeare:

By Vandergucht, to Rowe's edit.	1709.
Vertue, half ſheet, Set of Poets	1719.
Do. ſmall oval, Jacob's Lives	1719.
Do. to Warburton's 8vo.	1747.
Duchange, 8vo. to Theobald's	1733.
Gravelot, half ſheet, Hanmer's edit.	1744.
Houbraken, half ſheet, Birch's Heads	1747.
Millar, ſmall oval, Capell's Shakſpeare	1766.
Hall, 8vo. Reed's edit.	1785.
Cook, 8vo. Bell's edit.	1788.
Knight, 8vo. Mr. Malone's edit.	1790.
Harding, 8vo. Set of Prints to Shakſpeare	1793.

No two of theſe Portraits are alike; nor does any one of them bear the ſlighteſt reſemblance to its wretched original. G. S.

like the ivory rake and golden ſpade in Prudentius, are on this occaſion diſgraced by the objects of their culture.—Had Shakſpeare produced no other works than theſe, his name would have reached us with as little celebrity as time has conferred on that of Thomas Watſon, an older and much more elegant ſonnetteer.[6]

What remains to be added concerning this republication is, that a conſiderable number of freſh remarks are both adopted and ſupplied by the preſent editors. They have perſiſted in their former track of reading for the illuſtration of their author, and cannot help obſerving that thoſe who receive the benefit of explanatory extracts from ancient writers, little know at what expence of time and labour ſuch atoms of intelligence have been collected. —That the foregoing information, however, may communicate no alarm, or induce the reader to ſuppoſe we have "beſtowed our whole tediouſneſs" on him, we ſhould add, that many notes have likewiſe been withdrawn. A few, manifeſtly erroneous, are indeed retained, to ſhow how much the tone of Shakſpearian criticiſm is changed, or on account of the ſkill diſplayed in their confutation; for ſurely

[6] His Sonnets, though printed without date, were entered in the year 1581, on the books of the Stationers' Company, under the title of "Watſon's Paſſions, manifeſting the true Frenzy of Love."

Shakſpeare appears to have been among the number of his readers, having in the following paſſage of *Venus and Adonis*,—

"Leading him priſoner *in a red-roſe chain*;"

borrowed an idea from his 83d Sonnet:

"The Muſes not long ſince intrapping love
"*In chaines of roſes*," &c.

Watſon, however, declares on this occaſion that he imitated Ronſard; and it muſt be confeſſed, with equal truth, that in the preſent inſtance Ronſard had been a borrower from Anacreon.

every editor in his turn is occaſionally entitled to be ſeen, as he would have ſhown himſelf, with his vanquiſhed adverſary at his feet. We have therefore been ſometimes willing to "bring a corollary, rather than want a ſpirit." Nor, to confeſs the truth, did we always think it juſtifiable to ſhrink our predeceſſors to pigmies, that we ourſelves, by force of compariſon, might aſſume the bulk of giants.

The preſent editors muſt alſo acknowledge, that unleſs in particular inſtances, where the voice of the publick had decided againſt the remarks of Dr. Johnſon, they have heſitated to diſplace them; and had rather be charged with a ſuperſtitious reverence for his name, than cenſured for a preſumptuous diſregard of his opinions.

As a large proportion of Mr. Monck Maſon's ſtrictures on a former edition of Shakſpeare are here inſerted, it has been thought neceſſary that as much of his Preface as was deſigned to introduce them, ſhould accompany their ſecond appearance. Any formal recommendation of them is needleſs, as their own merit is ſure to rank their author among the moſt diligent and ſagacious of our celebrated poet's annotators.

It may be proper, indeed, to obſerve, that a few of theſe remarks are omitted, becauſe they had been anticipated; and that a few others have excluded themſelves by their own immoderate length; for he who publiſhes a ſeries of comments unattended by the text of his author, is apt to "overflow the meaſure" allotted to marginal criticiſm. In theſe caſes, either the commentator or the poet muſt give way, and no reader will patiently endure to ſee "Alcides beaten by his page."—*Inferior volat umbra deo.*— Mr. M. Maſon will alſo forgive us if we add, that a ſmall number of his propoſed amendments are

ſuppreſſed through honeſt commiſeration. "'Tis much he dares, and he has a wiſdom that often guides his valour to act in ſafety;" yet occaſionally he forgets the prudence that ſhould attend conjecture, and therefore, in a few inſtances, would have been produced only to have been perſecuted.—May it be ſubjoined, that the freedom with which the ſame gentleman has treated the notes of others, ſeems to have authorized an equal degree of licence reſpecting his own? And yet, though the ſword may have been drawn againſt him, he ſhall not complain that its point is "unbated and envenomed;" for the conductors of this undertaking do not ſcruple thus openly to expreſs their wiſhes that it may have merit enough to provoke a reviſion from the acknowledged learning and perſpicacity of their Hibernian coadjutor.—Every re-impreſſion of our great dramatick maſter's works muſt be conſidered in ſome degree as experimental; for their corruptions and obſcurities are ſtill ſo numerous, and the progreſs of fortunate conjecture ſo tardy and uncertain, that our remote deſcendants may be perplexed by paſſages that have perplexed us; and the readings which have hitherto diſunited the opinions of the learned, may continue to diſunite them as long as England and Shakſpeare have a name. In ſhort, the peculiarity once aſcribed to the poetick iſle of Delos,[8] may be exemplified in our author's text, which, on account of readings alternately received and reprobated, muſt remain in an unſettled ſtate, and float in obedience to every gale of contradictory criticiſm.—Could a perfect and deciſive edition of the following ſcenes be produced, it were

[8] "——nec *inſtabili* famâ ſuperabere *Delo*."
Stat. *Achill.* I. 388.

to be expected only (though we fear in vain) from the hand of Dr. Farmer,[9] whoſe more ſerious avocations forbid him to undertake what every reader would delight to poſſeſs.

But as we are often reminded by our "brethren of the craft," that this or that emendation, however apparently neceſſary, is not the *genuine text of Shakſpeare*, it might be imagined that we had received this text from its fountain head, and were therefore certain of its purity. Whereas few literary occurrences are better underſtood, than that it came down to us diſcoloured by "the variation of every ſoil" through which it had flowed, and that it ſtagnated at laſt in the muddy reſervoir of the firſt folio.[1] In plainer terms, that the vitiations of a careleſs theatre were ſeconded by thoſe of as ignorant a preſs. The integrity of dramas thus prepared for the world, is juſt on a level with the innocence of females nurſed in a camp and educated in a bagnio.—As often therefore as we are told, that by admitting corrections warranted by common

[9] He died September 8th, 1797.

[1] It will perhaps be urged, that to this firſt folio we are indebted for the only copies of ſixteen or ſeventeen of our author's plays: True: but may not our want of yet earlier and leſs corrupted editions of theſe very dramas be ſolely attributed to the monopolizing vigilance of its editors, Meſſieurs Hemings and Condell? Finding they had been deprived of ſome tragedies and comedies which, when opportunity offered, they deſigned to publiſh for their own emolument, they redoubled their ſolicitude to withhold the reſt, and were but too ſucceſsful in their precaution. "Thank fortune (ſays the original putterforth of *Troilus and Creſſida*) for the ſcape it hath made amongſt you; ſince by the *grand poſſeſſors'* wills, I believe, you ſhould have pray'd for it, rather than beene pray'd."—Had quartos of *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *All's well that ends well*, &c. been ſent into the world, from how many corruptions might the text of all theſe dramas have been ſecured!

ſenſe and the laws of metre, we have not rigidly adhered to the text of Shakſpeare, we ſhall entreat our opponents to exchange that phraſe for another "more germane," and ſay inſtead of it, that we have deviated from the text of the publiſhers of ſingle plays in quarto, or their ſucceſſors, the editors of the firſt folio; that we have ſometimes followed the ſuggeſtions of a Warburton, a Johnſon, a Farmer, or a Tyrwhitt, in preference to the deciſions of a Hemings or a Condell, notwithſtanding their choice of readings might have been influenced by aſſociates whoſe high-ſounding names cannot fail to enforce reſpect, viz. William Oſtler, John Shanke, William Sly, and Thomas Poope.[a]

To revive the anomalies, barbariſms and blunders of ſome ancient copies, in preference to the corrections of others almoſt equally old, is likewiſe a circumſtance by no means honourable to our author, however ſecure reſpecting ourſelves. For what is it, under pretence of reſtoration, but to uſe him as he has uſed the Tinker in *The Taming of a Shrew*,—to re-clothe him in his priſtine rags? To aſſemble parallels in ſupport of all theſe deformities, is no inſuperable labour; for if we are permitted to avail ourſelves of every typographical miſtake, and every provincial vulgariſm and offence againſt eſtabliſhed grammar, that may be met with in the coëval productions of irregular humouriſts and ignorant ſectaries and buffoons, we may aver that every caſual combination of ſyllables may be tortured into meaning, and every ſpecies of corruption exemplified by correſponding depravities of language; but not of ſuch language as Shakſpeare, if compared with him-

[a] See firſt folio, &c. for the liſt of actors in our author's plays.

ſelf where he is perfect, can be ſuppoſed to have written. By ſimilar reference it is that the ſtyle of many an ancient building has been characteriſtically reſtored. The members of architecture left entire, have inſtructed the renovator how to ſupply the loſs of ſuch as had fallen into decay. The poet, therefore, whoſe dialogue has often, during a long and uninterrupted ſeries of lines, no other peculiarities than were common to the works of his moſt celebrated contemporaries, and whoſe general eaſe and ſweetneſs of verſification are hitherto unrivalled, ought not ſo often to be ſuſpected of having produced ungrammatical nonſenſe, and ſuch rough and defective numbers as would diſgrace a village ſchool-boy in his firſt attempts at Engliſh poetry.—It may alſo be obſerved, that our author's earlieſt compoſitions, his Sonnets, &c. are wholly free from metrical imperfections.

The truth is, that from one extreme we have reached another. Our incautious predeceſſors, Rowe, Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton, were ſometimes juſtly blamed for wanton and needleſs deviations from ancient copies; and we are afraid that cenſure will as equitably fall on ſome of us, for a revival of irregularities which have no reaſonable ſanction, and few champions but ſuch as are excited by a fruitleſs ambition to defend certain poſts and paſſes that had been ſuppoſed untenable. The "wine of collation," indeed, had long been "drawn," and little beſide the "mere lees was left" for very modern editors "to brag of." It ſhould, therefore, be remembered, that as judgment, without the aid of collation, might have inſufficient materials to work on, ſo collation, diveſted of judgment, will be often worſe than thrown away; becauſe it introduces obſcurity inſtead of light. To render Shakſpeare leſs intelli-

gible by the recall of corrupt phraſeology, is not, in our opinion, the ſureſt way to extend his fame and multiply his readers; unleſs (like Curll the bookſeller, when the Jews ſpoke Hebrew to him,) they happen to have moſt faith in what they leaſt underſtand. Reſpecting our author, therefore, on ſome occaſions, we cannot join in the prayer of Cordelia:—

> " ——————*Reſtoration* hang
> " Thy medicine on his lips!"

It is unlucky for him, perhaps, that between the intereſt of his readers and his editors a material difference ſhould ſubſiſt. The former wiſh to meet with as few difficulties as poſſible, while the latter are tempted to ſeek them out, becauſe they afford opportunities for explanatory criticiſm.

Omiſſions in our author's works are frequently ſuſpected, and ſometimes not without ſufficient reaſon. Yet, in our opinion, they have ſuffered a more certain injury from interpolation; for almoſt as often as their meaſure is deranged, or redundant, ſome words, alike unneceſſary to ſenſe and the grammar of the age, may be diſcovered, and, in a thouſand inſtances, might be expunged, without loſs of a ſingle idea meant to be expreſſed; a liberty which we have ſometimes taken, though not (as it is hoped) without conſtant notice of it to the reader. Enough of this, however, has been already attempted, to ſhow that more on the ſame plan might be done with ſafety.[3]—So far from underſtanding the power

[3] Sufficient inſtances of meaſure thus rendered defective, and in the preſent edition unamended, may be found in the three laſt Acts of *Hamlet*, and in *Othello*. The length of this prefatory advertiſement has precluded their exemplification, which was

of an ellipſis, we may venture to affirm that the very name of this figure in rhetorick never reached the ears of our ancient editors. Having on this ſubject the ſupport of Dr. Farmer's acknowledged judgment and experience, we ſhall not ſhrink from controverſy with thoſe who maintain a different opinion, and refuſe to acquieſce in modern ſuggeſtions if oppoſed to the authority of quartos and folios, conſigned to us by a ſet of people who were wholly uninſtructed in the common forms of ſtyle, orthography, and punctuation.—We do not therefore heſitate to affirm, that a blind fidelity to the eldeſt printed copies, is on ſome occaſions a confirmed treaſon againſt the ſenſe, ſpirit, and verſification of Shakſpeare.

All theſe circumſtances conſidered, it is time, inſtead of a timid and ſervile adherence to ancient copies, when (offending againſt ſenſe and metre) they furniſh no real help, that a future editor, well acquainted with the phraſeology of our author's age, ſhould be at liberty to reſtore ſome apparent meaning to his corrupted lines, and a decent flow to his obſtructed verſification. The latter (as already has been obſerved) may be frequently effected by the expulſion of uſeleſs and ſupernumerary ſyllables, and an occaſional ſupply of ſuch as might fortuitouſly have been omitted, notwithſtanding the declaration of Hemings and Condell, whoſe fraudulent preface aſſerts that they have publiſhed our author's plays "as abſolute in their numbers as he conceived them." Till ſomewhat reſembling the proceſs above ſuggeſted be authorized, the publick will aſk in vain for a

here meant to have been given.—We wiſh, however, to impreſs the foregoing circumſtance on the memory of the judicious reader.

commodious and pleaſant text of Shakſpeare. Nothing will be loſt to the world on account of the meaſure recommended, there being folios and quartos enough remaining for the uſe of antiquarian or critical travellers, to whom a jolt over a rugged pavement may be more delectable than an eaſy paſſage over a ſmooth one, though they both conduct to the ſame object.

To a reader unconverſant with the licenſes of a theatre, the charge of more material interpolation than that of mere ſyllables, will appear to want ſupport; and yet whole lines and paſſages in the following plays incur a very juſt ſuſpicion of having originated from this practice, which continues even in the preſent improved ſtate of our dramatick arrangements; for the propenſity of modern performers to alter words, and occaſionally introduce ideas incongruous with their author's plan, will not always eſcape detection. In ſuch vagaries our comedians have been much too frequently indulged; but to the injudicious tragical interpolator no degree of favour ſhould be ſhown, not even to a late Matilda, who, in Mr. Home's *Douglas* thought fit to change the obſcure intimation with which her part ſhould have concluded—

" ——————— ſuch a ſon,
" And ſuch a huſband, *make a woman bold.*—

into a plain avowal, that

" ——————— ſuch a ſon,
" And ſuch a huſband, *drive me to my fate.*"

Here we perceive that Fate, the old poſt-horſe of tragedy, has been ſaddled to expedite intelligence which was meant to be delayed till the neceſſary moment of its diſcloſure. Nay, further: the prompt-

er's book being thus corrupted, on the firſt night of the revival of this beautiful and intereſting play at Drury Lane, the ſame ſpurious nonſenſe was heard from the lips of Mrs. Siddons, lips, whoſe matchleſs powers ſhould be ſacred only to the taſk of animating the pureſt ſtrains of dramatick poetry.—Many other inſtances of the ſame preſumption might have been ſubjoined, had they not been withheld through tenderneſs to performers now upon the ſtage.—Similar interpolations, however, in the text of Shakſpeare, can only be ſuſpected, and therefore muſt remain unexpelled.

To other defects of our late editions may be ſubjoined, as not the leaſt notorious, an exuberance of comment. Our ſituation has not unaptly reſembled that of the fray in the firſt ſcene of *Romeo and Juliet:*

> " While we were interchanging thruſts and blows,
> " Came more and more, and fought on part and part:

till, as Hamlet has obſerved, we are contending

> " ——————— for a plot
> " Whereon the numbers cannot try the cauſe."

Indulgence to the remarks of others, as well as partiality to our own; an ambition in each little Hercules to ſet up pillars, aſcertaining how far he had travelled through the dreary wilds of black letter; and perhaps a reluctance or inability to decide between contradictory ſentiments, have alſo occaſioned the appearance of more annotations than were abſolutely wanted, unleſs it be thought requiſite that our author, like a Dauphin Claſſick, ſhould be reduced to marginal proſe for the uſe of children; that all his various readings (aſſembled by Mr. Capell) ſhould

be enumerated, the genealogies of all his real perſonages deduced; and that as many of his plays as are founded on Roman or Britiſh hiſtory, ſhould be attended by complete tranſcripts from their originals in Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch*, or the Chronicles of Hall and Holinſhed.—Theſe faults, indeed,—*ſi quid prodeſt delicta fateri*,—within half a century, (when the preſent race of voluminous criticks is extinct) cannot fail to be remedied by a judicious and frugal ſelection from the labours of us all. Nor is ſuch an event to be deprecated even by ourſelves; ſince we may be certain that ſome ivy of each individual's growth will ſtill adhere to the parent oak, though not enough, as at preſent, to "hide the princely trunk, and ſuck the verdure out of it."[3]—It may be feared too, ſhould we perſiſt in ſimilar accumulations of extraneous matter, that the readers will at length be frighted away from Shakſpeare, as the ſoldiers of Cato deſerted their comrade when he became bloated with poiſon—*creſcens fugère cadaver*. It is our opinion, in ſhort, that every one who opens the page of an ancient Engliſh writer, ſhould bring with him ſome knowledge; and yet he by whom a thouſand minutiæ remain to be learned, needs not to cloſe our author's volume in deſpair, for his ſpirit and general drift are always obvious, though his language and alluſions are occaſionally obſcure.

We may ſubjoin (alluding to our own practice as well as that of others) that they whoſe remarks are longeſt, and who ſeek the moſt frequent opportunities of introducing their names at the bottom of our author's pages are not, on that account, the moſt eſtimable criticks. The art of writing notes, as Dr. Johnſon has pleaſantly obſerved in his preface,

[3] *Tempeſt.*

is not of difficult attainment.[4] Additional hundreds might therefore be ſupplied; for as often as a various reading, whether ſerviceable or not, is to be found, the diſcoverer can beſtow an immediate reward on his own induſtry, by a diſplay of his favourite ſignature. The ſame advantage may be gained by opportunities of appropriating to ourſelves what was originally ſaid by another perſon, and in another place.

Though our adoptions have been ſlightly mentioned already, our fourth impreſſion of the Plays of Shakſpeare muſt not iſſue into the world without particular and ample acknowledgements of the benefit it has derived from the labours of the laſt editor, whoſe attention, diligence, and ſpirit of enquiry, have very far exceeded thoſe of the whole united phalanx of his predeceſſors.—His additions to our author's Life, his attempt to aſcertain the Order in which his Plays were written, together with his account of our ancient Stage, &c. are here re-publiſhed; and every reader will concur in wiſhing that a gentleman who has produced ſuch intelligent combinations from very few materials, had fortunately been poſſeſſed of more.

Of his notes on particular paſſages a great majority is here adopted. True it is, that on ſome points we fundamentally diſagree; for inſtance, concerning his metamorphoſis of monoſyllables (like *burn*, *ſworn*, *worn*, *here* and *there*, *arms*, and *charms*,) into diſſyllables; his contraction of diſſyllables (like *neither*, *rather*, *reaſon*, *lover*, &c.) into monoſyllables; and his ſentiments reſpecting the worth of the variations ſupplied by the ſecond folio.—On the firſt of theſe conteſted matters

[4] See alſo Addiſon's *Spectator*, No. 470.

we commit ourſelves to the publick ear; on the ſecond we muſt awhile ſolicit the reader's attention.

The following conjectural account of the publication of this ſecond folio (about which no certainty can be obtained) perhaps is not very remote from truth.

When the predeceſſor of it appeared, ſome intelligent friend or admirer of Shakſpeare might have obſerved its defects, and corrected many of them in its margin, from early manuſcripts,[5] or authentick information.

That ſuch manuſcripts ſhould have remained, can excite no ſurprize. The good fortune that, till this preſent hour, has preſerved the *Cheſter and Coventry Myſteries*, *Tancred and Giſmund*[6] as originally written, the ancient play of *Timon*, the *Witch* of Middleton, with ſeveral older as well as coëval dramas (excluſive of thoſe in the Marquis of Lanſdowne's library) might ſurely have befriended ſome of our author's copies in 1632, only ſixteen years after his death.

That oral information concerning his works was ſtill acceſſible, may with ſimilar probability be inferred; as ſome of the original and moſt knowing performers in his different pieces were then alive (Lowin and Taylor, for inſtance,); and it muſt be certain, that on the ſtage they never uttered ſuch mutilated lines and unintelligible nonſenſe as was afterwards incorporated with their reſpective parts, in both the firſt quarto and folio editions.

[5] See Mr. Holt White's note on *Romeo and Juliet*, Vol. XX. p. 97, n. 5.

[6] i. e. as acted before Queen Elizabeth in 1568. See Warton, Vol. III. p. 376, n. g.

The folio therefore of 1623, corrected from one or both the authorities above mentioned, we conceive to have been the baſis of its ſucceſſor in 1632.

At the ſame time, however, a freſh and abundant ſeries of errors and omiſſions was created in the text of our author; the natural and certain conſequence of every re-impreſſion of a work which is not overſeen by other eyes than thoſe of its printer.

Nor is it at all improbable that the perſon who furniſhed the reviſion of the firſt folio, wrote a very obſcure hand, and was much cramped for room, as the margin of this book is always narrow. Such being the caſe, he might often have been compelled to deal in abbreviations, which were ſometimes imperfectly deciphered, and ſometimes wholly miſunderſtood.

Mr. Malone, indeed, frequently points his artillery at a perſonage whom we cannot help regarding as a phantom; we mean the *Editor* of the ſecond folio; for perhaps no ſuch literary agent as an editor of a poetical work, unaccompanied by comments, was at that period to be found. This office, if any where, was veſted in the printer, who transferred it to his compoſitors; and theſe worthies diſcharged their part of the truſt with a proportionate mixture of ignorance and inattention. We do not wiſh to ſoften our expreſſion; for ſome plays, like *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, and many books of ſuperior conſequence, like Fox's *Martyrs*, and the ſecond edition of the *Chronicles* of Holinſhed, &c. were carefully prepared for the publick eye by their immediate authors, or ſubſtitutes qualified for their undertaking.[7] But about the year 1600, the era of total incorrectneſs

[7] Abraham Fleming ſuperviſed, corrected, and enlarged the the ſecond edition of Holinſhed's *Chronicle*, in 1585.

commenced, and works of almoſt all kinds appeared with the diſadvantage of more than their natural and inherent imperfections.

Such too, in theſe more enlightened days, when few compoſitors are unſkilled in orthography and punctuation, would be the event, were complicated works of fancy ſubmitted to no other ſuperintendance than their own. More attentive and judicious artiſts than were employed on our preſent edition of Shakſpeare, are, I believe, no where to be found; and yet had their proofs eſcaped correction from an editor, the text of our author in many places would have been materially changed. And as all theſe changes would have originated from attention for a moment relaxed, interrupted memory, a too haſty glance at the page before them, and other incidental cauſes, they could not have been recommended in preference to the variations of the ſecond folio, which in ſeveral inſtances have been juſtly reprobated by the laſt editor of Shakſpeare. What errors then might not have been expected, when compoſitors were wholly unlettered and careleſs, and a corrector of the preſs an officer unknown? To him who is inclined to diſpute our grounds for this laſt aſſertion, we would recommend a peruſal of the errata at the ends of multitudes of our ancient publications, where the reader's indulgence is entreated for "faults eſcaped on account of the author's diſtance from the preſs;" faults, indeed, which could not have occurred, had every printing-office, as at preſent, been furniſhed with a regular and literary ſuperintendant of its productions.—How then can it be expected that printers who were often found unequal to the taſk of ſetting forth even a plain proſe narrative, conſiſting of a few ſheets, without blunders innumerable, ſhould have done

juſtice to a folio volume of dramatick dialogues in metre, which required a ſo much greater degree of accuracy?

But the worth of our conteſted volume alſo ſeems to be queſtioned, becauſe the authority on which even ſuch changes in it as are allowed to be judicious, is unknown. But if weight were granted to this argument, what ſupport could be found for ancient Greek and Roman MSS. of various deſcriptions? The names of their tranſcribers are alike undiſcovered; and yet their authority, when the readings they preſent are valuable, will ſeldom fail to be admitted.

Nay, further:—it is on all hands allowed, that what we ſtyle a younger and inferior MS. will occaſionally correct the miſtakes and ſupply the deficiencies of one of better note, and higher antiquity.—Why, therefore, ſhould not a book printed in 1632 be allowed the merit of equal ſervices to a predeceſſor in 1623?

Such alſo, let us add, were the ſentiments of a gentleman whoſe name we cannot repeat without a ſigh, which thoſe who were acquainted with his value, will not ſuſpect of inſincerity: we mean our late excellent friend, Mr. Tyrwhitt. In his library was this ſecond folio of our author's plays. He always ſtood forward as a determined advocate for its authority, on which, we believe, more than one of his emendations were formed. At leaſt, we are certain that he never attempted any, before he had conſulted it.

He was once, indeed, offered a large fragment of the firſt folio; but in a few days he returned it, with an aſſurance that he did not perceive any decided ſuperiority it could boaſt over its immediate ſucceſſor,

as the metre, imperfect in the elder, was often reſtored to regularity in the junior impreſſion.

Mr. Malone, however, in his *Letter to Dr. Farmer*, has ſtyled theſe neceſſary corrections ſuch "as could not eſcape a perſon of the moſt ordinary capacity, who had been one month converſant with a printing-houſe;" a deſcription mortifying enough to the preſent editors, who, after an acquaintance of many years with typographical myſteries, would be loath to weigh their own amendments againſt thoſe which this ſecond folio, with all its blunders, has diſplayed.

The ſame gentleman alſo (ſee his Preface, p. 410) ſpeaks with ſome confidence of having *proved* his aſſertions relative to the worthleſsneſs of this book. But how are theſe aſſertions proved? By expoſing its errors (ſome of which nevertheleſs are of a very queſtionable ſhape) and by obſerving a careful ſilence about its deſerts.[8] The latter ſurely ſhould have been ſtated as well as the former. Otherwiſe, this proof will reſemble the "ill-roaſted egg" in *As you like it*, which was done only "on one ſide." —If, in the mean time, ſome critical arithmetician can be found, who will impartially and intelligently aſcertain by way of D^r and C^r the faults and merits of this book, and thereby prove the former to have been many, and the latter ſcarce any at all, we will moſt openly acknowledge our miſapprehenſion, and ſubſcribe (a circumſtance of which we need not

[8] Thus (as one inſtance out of ſeveral that might be produced) when Mr. Malone, in *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, very judiciouſly reſtores the uncommon word—*ging*, and ſupports it by inſtances from *The New Inn* and *The Alchemiſt*, he forbears to mention that ſuch alſo is the reading of the *ſecond*, though *not* of the *firſt* folio. See Vol. V. p. 166, n. 5.

be aſhamed) to the ſuperior ſagacity and judgment of Mr. Malone.

To conclude, though we are far from aſſerting that this republication, generally conſidered, is preferable to its original, we muſt ſtill regard it as a valuable ſupplement to that work; and no ſtronger plea in its favour can be advanced, than the frequent uſe made of it by Mr. Malone. The numerous corrections from it admitted by that gentleman into his text,[9] and pointed out in his notes,

[9] Amounting to (as we are informed by a very accurate compoſitor who undertook to count them) 186.

Inſtances wherein Mr. Malone has admitted the Corrections of the *Second* Folio.

Tempeſt	4
Two Gentlemen of Verona	10
Merry Wives of Windſor	5
Meaſure for Meaſure	15
Comedy of Errors	11
Much Ado about Nothing	0
Love's Labour's Loſt	13
Midſummer-Night's Dream	4
Merchant of Venice	2
As you like it	15
Taming of the Shrew	16
All's well that ends well	6
Twelfth-Night	3
Winter's Tale	8
Macbeth	6
King John	3
King Richard II.	1
King Henry IV. Part I.	1
——— *II.*	1
King Henry V.	7
King Henry VI. Part I.	6
——— *II.*	6
——— *III.*	2
King Richard III.	0

will, in our judgment, contribute to its eulogium; at leaſt cannot fail to reſcue it from his prefatory imputations of—"being of no value whatever," and afterwards of—"not being worth—three ſhillings."[1] See Mr. Malone's Preface, and Liſt of Editions of Shakſpeare.

Our readers, it is hoped, will ſo far honour us as to obſerve, that the foregoing opinions were not ſuggeſted and defended through an ambitious ſpirit of contradiction. Mr. Malone's Preface, indeed, will abſolve us from that cenſure; for he allows them to be of a date previous to his own edition.

King Henry VIII.	6
Coriolanus	0
Julius Cæſar	2
Antony and Cleopatra	7
Timon of Athens	6
Troilus and Creſſida	0
Cymbeline	10
King Lear	3
Romeo and Juliet	4
Hamlet	3
Othello	0
Total	186

PLYMSELL.

[1] This doctrine, however, appears to have made few proſelytes: at leaſt, ſome late catalogues of our good friends the bookſellers, have expreſſed their diſſent from it in terms of uncommon force. I muſt add, that on the 34th day of the auction of the late Dr. Farmer's library, this proſcribed volume was ſold for THREE GUINEAS; and that in the ſale of Mr. Allen's library, April the 15th, 1799, at Leigh and Sotheby's, York Street, Covent Garden, the four folio editions of our author's plays were diſpoſed of at the following prices:

Sale No.		
1460.	firſt folio	£40 19 0.
61.	2d do.	5 10 0.
62.	3d do.	5 15 6.
63.	4th do.	3 13 6.

He, therefore, on this ſubject, is the aſſailant, and not the conductors of the preſent republication.

But though, in the courſe of ſucceeding ſtrictures, ſeveral other of Mr. Malone's poſitions may be likewiſe controverted, ſome with ſerioufneſs, and ſome with levity, (for our diſcuſſions are not of quite ſo ſolemn a turn as thoſe which involve the intereſts of our country,) we feel an undiſſembled pleaſure in avowing, that his remarks are at once ſo numerous and correct, that when criticiſm "has done its worſt," their merit but in a ſmall degree can be affected. We are confident, however, that he himſelf will hereafter join with us in conſidering no ſmall proportion of our conteſted readings as a mere game at literary puſh-pin; and that if Shakſpeare looks down upon our petty ſquabbles over his mangled ſcenes, it muſt be with feelings ſimilar to thoſe of Lucan's hero:

——*ridetque ſui ludibria trunci.*

In the Preface of Mr. Malone, indeed, a direct cenſure has been levelled at incorrectneſs in the text of the edition 1778. The juſtice of the imputation is unequivocally allowed; but, at the ſame time, might not this acknowledgement be ſeconded by ſomewhat like a retort? For is it certain that the collations, &c. of 1790 are wholly ſecure from ſimilar charges? Are they accompanied by no unauthorized readings, no omiſſion of words, and tranſpoſitions? Through all the plays, and eſpecially thoſe of which there is only a ſingle copy, they have been with ſome diligence retraced, and the frailties of their collator, ſuch as they are, have been aſcertained. They ſhall not, however, be oſtentatiouſly pointed out, and for this only reaſon:—That as they decreaſe but little, if at all, the

vigour of Shakſpeare, the critick who in general has performed with accuracy one of the heavieſt of literary taſks, ought not to be moleſted by a diſplay of petty faults, which might have eluded the moſt vigilant faculties of ſight and hearing that were ever placed as ſpies over the labours of each other. They are not even mentioned here as a covert mode of attack, or as a "note of preparation" for future hoſtilities. The office of "deviſing brave puniſhments" for faithleſs editors, is therefore ſtrenuouſly declined, even though their guilt ſhould equal that of one of their number, (Mr. Steevens,) who ſtands convicted of having given *winds* inſtead of *wind*, *ſtables* inſtead of *ſtable*, *ſeſſions* inſtead of *ſeſſion*, *ſins* inſtead of *ſin*, and (we ſhudder while we recite the accuſation) *my* inſtead of *mine*.[2]

"——————— Such ſmall deer
"Have been our food for many a year;"

ſo long, in truth, that any further purſuit of them is here renounced, together with all triumphs founded on the detection of harmleſs ſynonymous particles that accidentally may have deſerted their proper places and wandered into others, without injury to Shakſpeare.—A few chipped or disjointed ſtones will not impair the ſhape or endanger the ſtability of a pyramid. We are far from wiſhing to depreciate exactneſs, yet cannot perſuade ourſelves but that a ſingle lucky conjecture or illuſtration, ſhould outweigh a thouſand ſpurious *haths* depoſed in favour of legitimate *has's*, and the like inſignificant recoveries, which may not too degradingly be termed—

[2] See Mr. Malone's Preface.

the haberdaſhery of criticiſm; that "ſtand in number, though in reckoning none;" and are as unimportant to the poet's fame,

> "As is the morn-dew on the myrtle-leaf
> "To his grand ſea."

We ſhall venture alſo to aſſert, that, on a minute ſcrutiny, every editor, in his turn, may be charged with omiſſion of ſome preferable reading; ſo that he who drags his predeceſſor to juſtice on this ſcore, will have good luck if he eſcapes ungalled by recrimination.

If ſomewhat, therefore, in the ſucceeding volumes has been added to the correction and illuſtration of our author, the purpoſe of his preſent editors is completely anſwered. On any thing like perfection in their labours they do not preſume, being too well convinced that, in defiance of their beſt efforts, their own incapacity, and that of the original quarto and folio-mongers, have ſtill left ſufficient work for a race of commentators who are yet unborn. *Nos,* (ſays Tully, in the ſecond Book of his *Tuſculan Queſtions,*) *qui ſequimur probabilia, nec ultra quàm id quod veriſimile occurrerit, progredi poſſumus; et refellere ſine pertinacia, et refelli ſine iracundia, parati ſumus.*

Be it remembered alſo, that the aſſiſtants and adverſaries of editors, enjoy one material advantage over editors themſelves. They are at liberty to ſelect their objects of remark:

> ——————— *et quæ*
> *Deſperant tractata niteſcere poſſe, relinquunt.*

The fate of the editor in form is leſs propitious.

He is expected to combat every difficulty from which his auxiliaries and opponents could ſecure an honourable retreat. It ſhould not, therefore, be wondered at, if ſome of his enterprizes are unſucceſsful.

Though the foregoing Advertiſement has run out into an unpremeditated length, one circumſtance remains to be mentioned.—The form and ſubſtance of the commentary attending this republication having been materially changed and enlarged ſince it firſt appeared, in compliance with ungrateful cuſtom the name of its original editor might have been withdrawn: but Mr. *Steevens* could not prevail on himſelf to forego an additional opportunity of recording in a title-page that he had once the honour of being united in a taſk of literature with Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON. This is a diſtinction which malevolence cannot obſcure, nor flattery transfer to any other candidate for publick favour.

IT may poſſibly be expected, that a liſt of Errata ſhould attend ſo voluminous a work as this, or that cancels ſhould apologize for its more material inaccuracies. Neither of theſe meaſures, however, has in the preſent inſtance been adopted, [redacted] reaſons now ſubmitted to the publick.

In regard to errata, it has been cuſt[redacted] not a few authors to acknowledge ſ[redacted]

that they might eſcape the ſuſpicion of greater,[3] or perhaps to intimate that no greater could be detected. Both little and great (and doubtleſs there may be the uſual proportion of both) are here expoſed (with very few exceptions) to the candour and perſpicacity of the reader, who needs not to be told that in fifteen volumes octavo, of intricate and variegated printing, gone through in the ſpace of about twenty months, the moſt vigilant eyes muſt occaſionally have been overwatched, and the readieſt knowledge intercepted. The ſight of the editors, indeed, was too much fatigued to encourage their engagement in ſo laborious a reviſion; and they are likewiſe convinced that ſubſtitutes are not always qualified for their taſk; but inſtead of pointing out real miſtakes, would have ſuppoſed the exiſtence of ſuch as were merely founded on their own want of acquaintance with the peculiarities of ancient ſpelling and language; for even modern poetry has ſometimes been in danger from the chances of their ſuperintendance. He whoſe buſineſs it is to offer this unuſual apology, very well remembers to have been ſitting with Dr. Johnſon, when an agent from a neighbouring preſs brought in the proof ſheet of a republication, requeſting to know whether a particular word in it was not corrupted. "So far from it, Sir, (replied the Doctor, with ſome harſhneſs,) that the word you ſuſpect and would diſplace, is conſpicuouſly beautiful where it ſtands, and is the only one that could have done the duty expected from [redacted] by Mr. Pope."

[redacted] for cancels, it is in the power of every care-

[redacted] the hoſpitable door
[redacted]s'd a matron, to avoid worſe rape."
Paradiſe Loſt, B. I. v. 504.

leſs binder to defeat their purpoſe; for they are ſo ſeldom lodged with uniformity in their proper places, that they as often ſerve to render copies imperfect, as to ſcreen an author from the charge of ignorance or inattention. The leaf appropriated to one volume, is ſometimes ſhuffled into the correſponding page of another; and ſometimes the faulty leaf is withdrawn, and no other ſubſtituted in its room. Theſe circumſtances might be exemplified; but the ſubject is ſcarcely of conſequence enough to be more than generally ſtated to the reader, whoſe indulgence is again ſolicited on account of blemiſhes which in the courſe of an undertaking like this are unavoidable, and could not, at its concluſion, have been remedied but by the hazard of more extenſive miſchief;—an indulgence, indeed, that will more readily be granted, and eſpecially for the ſake of the compoſitors, when it is underſtood, that, on an average, every page of the preſent work, including ſpaces, quadrats, points, and letters, is (to ſpeak technically) compoſed of 2680 diſtinct pieces of metal.[4]

[4] Number of letters, &c. in a page of Shakſpeare, 1793.

TEXT.	NOTES.
The average number in each line (including letters, points, ſpaces, &c.) is 47; the number of lines in a page—37.	The average number in each line (including letters, points, ſpaces, &c.) is 67; the number of lines in a page—47.
47	67
37	47
329	469
141	268
1739 in a page.	3149 in a page.

From this calculation it is clear, that a common page, admitting it to conſiſt of 1-3d text, and 2-3ds notes, contains

As was formerly therefore obſerved, he who waited till the river ſhould run dry, did not act with leſs reaſon than the editors would do, who ſhould ſuſpend a voluminous and complicated publication, in the vain hope of rendering it abſolutely free from literary and typographical errors.

about 2690 diſtinct pieces of metal; which multiplied by 16, the number of pages in a ſheet, will amount to 42,880—the miſplacing of any one of which would inevitably cauſe a blunder.

PLYMSELL.

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WRITTEN BY MR. ROWE.

IT ſeems to be a kind of reſpect due to the memory of excellent men, eſpecially of thoſe whom their wit and learning have made famous, to deliver ſome account of themſelves, as well as their works, to poſterity. For this reaſon, how fond do we ſee ſome people of diſcovering any little perſonal ſtory of the great men of antiquity! their families, the common accidents of their lives, and even their ſhape, make, and features, have been the ſubject of critical inquiries. How trifling ſoever this curioſity may ſeem to be, it is certainly very natural; and we are hardly ſatisfied with an account of any remarkable perſon, till we have heard him deſcribed even to the very clothes he wears. As for what relates to men of letters, the knowledge of an author may ſometimes conduce to the better underſtanding his book; and though the works of Mr. Shakſpeare may ſeem to many not to want a comment, yet I fancy ſome little account of the man

himſelf may not be thought improper to go along with them.

He was the ſon of Mr. John Shakſpeare, and was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickſhire, in April, 1564. His family, as appears by the regiſter and publick writings relating to that town, were of good figure and faſhion there, and are mentioned as gentlemen. His father, who was a conſiderable dealer in wool,[5] had ſo large a family, ten children

[5] *His father, who was a conſiderable dealer in wool,*] It appears that he had been an officer and bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon; and that he enjoyed ſome hereditary lands and tenements, the reward of his grandfather's faithful and approved ſervices to King Henry VII. See the extract from the Herald's Office.

THEOBALD.

The chief Magiſtrate of the Body Corporate of Stratford, now diſtinguiſhed by the title of Mayor, was in the early charters called the High Bailiff. This office Mr. John Shakſpeare filled in 1569, as appears from the following extracts from the books of the corporation, with which I have been favoured by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon:

"Jan. 10, in the 6th year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, John Shakſpeare paſſed his Chamberlain's accounts.

"At the Hall holden the eleventh day of September, in the eleventh year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Elizabeth, 1569, were preſent Mr. John Shakſpeare, High Bailiff." [Then follow the names of the Aldermen and Burgeſſes.]

"At the Hall holden Nov. 19th, in the 21ſt year of the reign of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, it is ordained, that every Alderman ſhall be taxed to pay weekly 4d. ſaving *John Shakſpeare* and Robert Bruce, who ſhall not be taxed to pay any thing; and every burgeſs to pay 2d."

"At the Hall holden on the 6th day of September, in the 28th year of our ſovereign lady Queen Elizabeth.

"At this Hall William Smith and Richard Courte are choſen to be Aldermen in the places of John Wheler, and John Shakſpeare, for that Mr. Wheler doth deſire to be put out of the company, and Mr. Shakſpere doth not come to the halls, when they be warned, nor hath not done of long time."

From theſe extracts it may be collected, (as is obſerved by the gentleman above mentioned, to whoſe obliging attention to my

in all, that though he was his eldeſt ſon, he could give him no better education than his own employment. He had bred him, it is true, for ſome time at a free-ſchool,[6] where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was maſter of: but the narrowneſs of his circumſtances, and the want of his aſſiſtance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language. It is without controverſy, that in his works we ſcarce find any traces of any thing that looks like an imitation of the ancients. The delicacy of his taſte, and the natural bent of his own great genius, (equal, if not ſuperior, to ſome of the beſt of theirs,) would certainly have led him to read and ſtudy them with ſo much pleaſure, that ſome of their fine images would naturally have inſinuated themſelves into, and been mixed

inquiries I am indebted for many particulars relative to our poet's family,) that Mr. John Shakſpeare in the former part of his life was in good circumſtances, ſuch perſons being generally choſen into the corporation; and from his being excuſed [in 1579] to pay 4d. weekly, and at a ſubſequent period (1586) put out of the corporation, that he was then reduced in his circumſtances.

It appears from a note to W. Dethick's Grant of Arms to him in 1596, now in the College of Arms, *Vincent*, Vol. 157, p. 24, that he was a juſtice of the peace, and poſſeſſed of lands and tenements to the amount of 500l.

Our poet's mother was the daughter and heir of Robert Arden of Wellingcote, in the county of Warwick, who, in the MS. above referred to, is called "a gentleman of worſhip." The family of *Arden* is a very ancient one; Robert Arden of Bromwich, Eſq. being in the liſt of the gentry of this county, returned by the commiſſioners in the twelfth year of King Henry VI. A. D. 1433. Edward Arden was Sheriff to the county in 1568.—The woodland part of this county was anciently called *Ardern*; afterwards ſoftened to *Arden*. Hence the name.

MALONE.

[6] *He had bred him, it is true, for ſome time at a free-ſchool,*] The free-ſchool, I preſume, founded at Stratford. THEOBALD.

with his own writings; ſo that his not copying at leaſt ſomething from them, may be an argument of his never having read them. Whether his ignorance of the ancients were a diſadvantage to him or no, may admit of a diſpute: for though the knowledge of them might have made him more correct, yet it is not improbable but that the regularity and deference for them, which would have attended that correctneſs, might have reſtrained ſome of that fire, impetuoſity, and even beautiful extravagance, which we admire in Shakſpeare: and I believe we are better pleaſed with thoſe thoughts, altogether new and uncommon, which his own imagination ſupplied him ſo abundantly with, than if he had given us the moſt beautiful paſſages out of the Greek and Latin poets, and that in the moſt agreeable manner that it was poſſible for a maſter of the Engliſh language to deliver them.

Upon his leaving ſchool, he ſeems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father propoſed to him;[7] and in order to ſettle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young.[8] His wife was

[7] ——*into that way of living which his father propoſed to him*;] I believe, that on leaving ſchool Shakſpeare was placed in the office of ſome country attorney, or the ſeneſchal of ſome manor court. See the *Eſſay on the Order of his Plays*, Article, *Hamlet*. MALONE.

[8] ——*he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young*,] It is certain he did ſo; for by the monument in Stratford church erected to the memory of his daughter, Suſanna, the wife of John Hall, gentleman, it appears, that ſhe died on the 2d of July, 1649, aged 66; ſo that ſhe was born in 1583, when her father could not be full 19 years old. THEOBALD.

Suſanna, who was our poet's eldeſt child, was baptized, May 26, 1583. Shakſpeare therefore, having been born in April 1564, was nineteen the month preceding her birth. Mr.

the daughter of one Hathaway,[9] ſaid to have been a ſubſtantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of ſettlement he continued for ſome time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of forced him both out of his country, and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it ſeemed at firſt to be a blemiſh upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occaſion of exerting one of the greateſt *geniuſes* that ever was known in dramatick poetry. He had by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongſt them, ſome that made a frequent practice of deer-ſtealing, engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was proſecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, ſomewhat too ſeverely; and in order to revenge that ill uſage, he made a ballad upon him.[1] And though this, pro-

Theobald was miſtaken in ſuppoſing that a *monument* was erected to her in the church of Stratford. There is no memorial there in honour of either our poet's wife or daughter, except flat tomb-ſtones, by which, however, the time of their reſpective deaths is aſcertained.—His daughter, Suſanna, died, not on the *ſecond*, but the *eleventh* of July, 1649. Theobald was led into this error by Dugdale. MALONE.

[9] *His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway,*] She was eight years older than her huſband, and died in 1623, at the age of 67 years. THEOBALD.

The following is the inſcription on her tomb-ſtone in the church of Stratford:

"Here lyeth interred the body of ANNE, wife of William Shakeſpeare, who departed this life the 6th day of Auguſt, 1623, being of the age of 67 yeares."

After this inſcription follow ſix Latin verſes, not worth preſerving. MALONE.

[1] —— *in order to revenge that ill uſage, he made a ballad upon him.*] Mr. William Oldys, (Norroy King at Arms, and

bably the firſt eſſay of his poetry, be loſt, yet it is ſaid to have been ſo very bitter, that it redoubled

well known from the ſhare he had in compiling the *Biographia Britannica*) among the collections which he left for a *Life of Shakſpeare*, obſerves, that " —there was a very aged gentleman living in the neighbourhood of Stratford, (where he died fifty years ſince) who had not only heard, from ſeveral old people in that town, of Shakſpeare's tranſgreſſion, but could remember the firſt ſtanza of that bitter ballad, which, repeating to one of his acquaintance, he preſerved it in writing; and here it is neither better nor worſe, but faithfully tranſcribed from the copy which his relation very courteouſly communicated to me:"

" A parliemente member, a juſtice of peace,
" At home a poor ſcare-crowe, at London an aſſe,
" If lowſie is Lucy, as ſome volke miſcalle it,
" Then Lucy is lowſie whatever befall it:
" He thinks himſelf greate,
" Yet an aſſe in his ſtate
" We allowe by his ears but with aſſes to mate.
" If Lucy is lowſie, as ſome volke miſcalle it,
" Sing lowſie Lucy, whatever befall it."

Contemptible as this performance muſt now appear, at the time when it was written it might have had ſufficient power to irritate a vain, weak, and vindictive magiſtrate; eſpecially as it was affixed to ſeveral of his park-gates, and conſequently publiſhed among his neighbours.—It may be remarked likewiſe, that the jingle on which it turns, occurs in the firſt ſcene of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*.

I may add, that the veracity of the late Mr. Oldys has never yet been impeached; and it is not very probable that a ballad ſhould be forged, from which an undiſcovered wag could derive no triumph over antiquarian credulity. STEEVENS.

According to Mr. Capell, this ballad came originally from Mr. Thomas Jones, who lived at Tarbick, a village in Worceſterſhire, about 18 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, and died in 1703, aged upwards of ninety. " He remembered to have heard from ſeveral old people at Stratford the ſtory of Shakſpeare's robbing Sir Thomas Lucy's park; and their account of it agreed with Mr. Rowe's, with this addition, that the ballad written againſt Sir Thomas Lucy by Shakſpeare was ſtuck upon his park-gate, which exaſperated the knight to apply to a lawyer at Warwick to proceed againſt him. Mr. Jones (it is added) put down in writing the firſt ſtanza of this ballad, which was all he

the proſecution againſt him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his buſineſs and family in Warwickſhire, for ſome time, and ſhelter himſelf in London.

It is at this time, and upon this accident, that he is ſaid to have made his firſt acquaintance in the playhouſe. He was received into the company then in being, at firſt in a very mean rank,[2] but

remembered of it." In a note on the tranſcript with which Mr. Capell was furniſhed, it is ſaid, that "the people of thoſe parts pronounce *louſie* like Lucy." They do ſo to this day in Scotland. Mr. Wilkes, grandſon of the gentleman to whom Mr. Jones repeated the ſtanza, appears to have been the perſon who gave a copy of it to Mr. Oldys, and Mr. Capell.

In a manuſcript *Hiſtory of the Stage*, full of forgeries and falſehoods of various kinds written (I ſuſpect by William Chetwood the prompter) ſome time between April 1727 and October 1730, is the following paſſage, to which the reader will give juſt as much credit as he thinks fit:

"Here we ſhall obſerve, that the learned Mr. Joſhua Barnes, late Greek Profeſſor of the Univerſity of Cambridge, baiting about forty years ago at an inn in Stratford, and hearing an old woman ſinging part of the above-ſaid ſong, ſuch was his reſpect for Mr. Shakſpeare's genius, that he gave her a new gown for the two following ſtanzas in it; and, could ſhe have ſaid it all, he would (as he often ſaid in company, when any diſcourſe has caſually aroſe about him) have given her ten guineas:

"Sir Thomas was too covetous,
"To covet ſo much deer,
"When horns enough upon his head,
"Moſt plainly did appear.

"Had not his worſhip one deer left?
"What then? He had a wife
"Took pains enough to find him horns
"Should laſt him during life." MALONE.

[2] *He was received into the company—at firſt in a very mean rank;*] There is a ſtage tradition, that his firſt office in the theatre was that of *Call-boy*, or prompter's attendant; whoſe employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready to enter, as often as the buſineſs of the play requires their appearance on the ſtage. MALONE.

his admirable wit, and the natural turn of it to the ſtage, ſoon diſtinguiſhed him, if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent writer. His name is printed, as the cuſtom was in thoſe times, amongſt thoſe of the other players, before ſome old plays, but without any particular account of what ſort of parts he uſed to play; and though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the Ghoſt in his own *Hamlet*.[3] I ſhould have been much more pleaſed, to have learned from certain authority, which was the firſt play he wrote;[4] it would be without doubt a pleaſure to any man, curious in things of this kind, to ſee and know what was the firſt eſſay of a fancy like Shakſpeare's. Perhaps we are not to look for his beginnings, like thoſe of other authors, among their leaſt perfect writings; art had ſo little, and nature ſo large a ſhare in what he did, that, for aught I know, the performances of his youth, as they were the moſt vigorous, and had the moſt fire and ſtrength of imagination in them, were the beſt.[5] I would not

[3] ——*than that the top of his performance was the Ghoſt in his own* Hamlet.] See ſuch notices as I have been able to collect on this ſubject, in the Liſt of old Engliſh actors, *poſt*. MALONE.

[4] ——*to have learned from certain authority, which was the firſt play he wrote*;] The higheſt date of any I can yet find, is *Romeo and Juliet* in 1597, when the author was 33 years old; and *Richard the Second, and Third,* in the next year, viz. the 34th of his age. POPE.

Richard II. and *III.* were both printed in 1597.—On the order of time in which Shakſpeare's plays were written, ſee the Eſſay in the next volume. MALONE.

[5] ——*for aught I know, the performances of his youth—were the beſt.*] See this notion controverted in *An Attempt to aſcertain the Order of Shakſpeare's Plays.* MALONE.

be thought by this to mean, that his fancy was ſo looſe and extravagant, as to be independent on the rule and government of judgment; but that what he thought was commonly ſo great, ſo juſtly and rightly conceived in itſelf, that it wanted little or no correction, and was immediately approved by an impartial judgment at the firſt ſight. But though the order of time in which the ſeveral pieces were written be generally uncertain, yet there are paſſages in ſome few of them which ſeem to fix their dates. So the *Chorus* at the end of the fourth act of *Henry the Fifth*, by a compliment very handſomely turned to the Earl of Eſſex, ſhows the play to have been written when that lord was general for the Queen in Ireland; and his elogy upon Queen Elizabeth, and her ſucceſſor King James, in the latter end of his *Henry the Eighth*, is a proof of that play's being written after the acceſſion of the latter of theſe two princes to the crown of England. Whatever the particular times of his writing were, the people of his age, who began to grow wonderfully fond of diverſions of this kind, could not but be highly pleaſed to ſee a genius ariſe amongſt them of ſo pleaſurable, ſo rich a vein, and ſo plentifully capable of furniſhing their favourite entertainments. Beſides the advantages of his wit, he was in himſelf a good-natured man, of great ſweetneſs in his manners, and a moſt agreeable companion; ſo that it is no wonder, if, with ſo many good qualities, he made himſelf acquainted with the beſt converſations of thoſe times. Queen Elizabeth had ſeveral of his plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour: it is that maiden princeſs plainly, whom he intends by

" ——a fair veſtal, throned by the weſt."
A Midſummer-Night's Dream.

and that whole paſſage is a compliment very properly brought in, and very handſomely applied to her. She was ſo well pleaſed with that admirable character of Falſtaff, in The Two Parts of *Henry the Fourth*, that ſhe commanded him to continue it for one play more,[6] and to ſhow him in love. This is ſaid to be the occaſion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windſor*. How well ſhe was obeyed, the play itſelf is an admirable proof. Upon this occaſion it may not be improper to obſerve, that this part of Falſtaff is ſaid to have been written originally under the name of *Oldcaſtle*:[7] ſome of that family being then remaining, the Queen was pleaſed to command him to alter it; upon which he made uſe of Falſtaff. The preſent offence was indeed avoided; but I do not know whether the author may not have been ſomewhat to blame in his ſecond choice, ſince it is certain that Sir John Falſtaff, who was a knight of the garter, and a lieutenant-general, was a name of diſtinguiſhed merit in the wars in France in Henry the Fifth's and Henry the Sixth's times. What grace ſoever the Queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only he owed the fortune which the reputation of

[6] ——*ſhe commanded him to continue it for one play more,*] This anecdote was firſt given to the publick by Dennis, in the *Epiſtle Dedicatory* to his comedy entitled *The Comical Gallant*, 4to. 1702, altered from *The Merry Wives of Windſor*.

MALONE.

[7] ——*this part of* Falſtaff *is ſaid to have been written originally under the name of* Oldcaſtle;] See the Epilogue to *Henry the Fourth*. POPE.

In a note ſubjoined to that Epilogue, and more fully in Vol. XI. p. 194, n. 3, the reader will find this notion overturned, and the origin of this *vulgar error* pointed out. Mr. Rowe was evidently deceived by a paſſage in Fuller's *Worthies*, miſunderſtood.

MALONE.

his wit made. He had the honour to meet with many great and uncommon marks of favour and friendſhip from the Earl of Southampton,[8] famous in the hiſtories of that time for his friendſhip to the unfortunate Earl of Eſſex. It was to that noble lord that he dedicated his poem of *Venus and Adonis*.[9] There is one inſtance ſo ſingular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakſpeare's, that if I had not been aſſured that the ſtory was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I ſhould not have ventured to have inſerted; that my Lord Southampton at one time gave him a thouſand pounds, to enable him to go through with a purchaſe which he heard he had a mind to. A bounty very great, and very rare at any time, and almoſt equal to that profuſe generoſity the preſent age has ſhown to French dancers and Italian ſingers.

What particular habitude or friendſhips he contracted with private men, I have not been able to learn, more than that every one, who had a true taſte of merit, and could diſtinguiſh men, had generally a juſt value and eſteem for him. His exceeding candour and good-nature muſt certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the moſt delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him.

His acquaintance with Ben Jonſon began with a

[8] ——*from the Earl of* Southampton,] Of this amiable nobleman ſuch memoirs as I have been able to collect, may be found in the tenth volume, [i. e. of Mr. Malone's edition] prefixed to the poem of *Venus and Adonis*. MALONE.

[9] ——*he dedicated his poem of* Venus and Adonis.] To this nobleman alſo he dedicated his *Rape of Lucrece*, printed in 4to. in 1594. MALONE.

remarkable piece of humanity and good-nature; Mr. Jonſon, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the perſons into whoſe hands it was put, after having turned it careleſsly and ſupercilioufly over, were juſt upon returning it to him with an ill-natured anſwer, that it would be of no ſervice to their company; when Shakſpeare luckily caſt his eye upon it, and found ſomething ſo well in it, as to engage him firſt to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonſon and his writings to the publick.[1]

[1] —— *to recommend* Mr. Jonſon *and his writings to the publick.*] In Mr. Rowe's firſt edition, after theſe words was inſerted the following paſſage:

"After this, they were profeſſed friends; though I do not know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleneſs and ſincerity. Ben was naturally proud and inſolent, and in the days of his reputation did ſo far take upon him the ſupremacy in wit, that he could not but look with an evil eye upon any one that ſeemed to ſtand in competition with him. And if at times he has affected to commend him, it has always been with ſome reſerve; inſinuating his uncorrectneſs, a careleſs manner of writing, and want of judgment. The praiſe of ſeldom altering or blotting out what he writ, which was given him by the players, who were the firſt publiſhers of his works after his death, was what Jonſon could not bear: he thought it impoſſible, perhaps, for another man to ſtrike out the greateſt thoughts in the fineſt expreſſion, and to reach thoſe excellencies of poetry with the eaſe of a firſt imagination, which himſelf with infinite labour and ſtudy could but hardly attain to."

I have preſerved this paſſage becauſe I believe it ſtrictly true, except that in the laſt line, inſtead of *but hardly*, I would read *—never.*

Dryden, we are told by Pope, concurred with Mr. Rowe in thinking Jonſon's poſthumous verſes on our author *ſparing* and *invidious.*—See alſo Mr. Steevens's note on thoſe verſes.

Before Shakſpeare's death Ben's envious diſpoſition is mentioned by one of his own friends; it muſt therefore have been even then notorious, though the writer denies the truth of the charge:

Jonſon was certainly a very good ſcholar, and in that had the advantage of Shakſpeare; though at

" To my well accompliſh'd friend, Mr. Ben. Jonſon.
" Thou art ſound in body; but ſome ſay, thy ſoule
" *Envy doth ulcer*; yet corrupted hearts
" Such cenſurers muſt have."
Scourge of Folly, by J. Davies, printed about 1611.

The following lines by one of Jonſon's admirers will ſufficiently ſupport Mr. Rowe in what he has ſaid relative to the ſlowneſs of that writer in his compoſitions:

" Scorn then their cenſures who gave out, thy wit
" As long upon a comedy did ſit
" As elephants bring forth, and that thy blots
" And mendings took more time than FORTUNE-PLOTS;
" That ſuch thy drought was, and ſo great thy thirſt,
" That all thy plays were drawn at the *Mermaid* firſt;
" That the king's yearly butt wrote, and his wine
" Hath more right than thou to thy *Catiline*."

The writer does not deny the charge, but vindicates his friend by ſaying that, however ſlow,—

" He that writes well, writes quick—."
Verſes on B. Jonſon, *by* Jaſper Mayne.

So alſo, another of his Panegyriſts:

" Admit his muſe was ſlow, 'tis judgment's fate
" To move like greateſt princes, ſtill in ſtate."

In *The Return from Parnaſſus*, 1606, Jonſon is ſaid to be " ſo *ſlow an enditer*, that he were better betake himſelf to his old trade of bricklaying." The ſame piece furniſhes us with the earlieſt intimation of the quarrel between him and Shakſpeare: " Why here's our fellow Shakſpeare put them [the univerſity poets] all down, ay, and Ben Jonſon too. O, that Ben Jonſon is a peſtilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakſpeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit." Fuller, who was a diligent inquirer, and lived near enough the time to be well informed, confirms this account, aſſerting in his *Worthies*, 1662, that " many were the wit-combats" between Jonſon and our poet.

It is a ſingular circumſtance that old Ben ſhould for near two centuries have ſtalked on the ſtilts of an artificial reputation; and that even at this day, of the very few who read his works, ſcarcely one in ten yet ventures to confeſs how little entertainment they afford. Such was the impreſſion made on the publick by the extravagant praiſes of thoſe who knew more of books than

the ſame time I believe it muſt be allowed, that what nature gave the latter, was more than a balance

of the drama, that Dryden in his *Eſſay on Dramatick Poeſie*, written about 1667, does not venture to go further in his elogium on Shakſpeare, than by ſaying, "he was at leaſt *Jonſon's equal*, if not his ſuperior;" and in the preface to his *Mock Aſtrologer*, 1671, he hardly dares to aſſert, what, in my opinion, cannot be denied, that "all Jonſon's pieces, except three or four, are but *crambe bis cocta*; the ſame humours a little varied, and written worſe."

Ben, however, did not truſt to the praiſe of others. One of his admirers honeſtly confeſſes,—

"——————— he
"Of whom I write this, has prevented me,
"And boldly ſaid ſo much in his own praiſe,
"No other pen need any trophy raiſe."

In vain, however, did he endeavour to bully the town into approbation by telling his auditors, "By G— 'tis good, and if you like't, you may;" and by pouring out againſt thoſe who preferred our poet to him, a torrent of illiberal abuſe; which, as Mr. Walpole juſtly obſerves, ſome of his contemporaries were willing to think wit, becauſe they were afraid of it; for, notwithſtanding all his arrogant boaſts, notwithſtanding all the clamour of his partizans both in his own life-time and for ſixty years after his death, the truth is, that his pieces, when firſt performed, were ſo far from being applauded by the people, that they were ſcarcely endured; and many of them were actually *damned*.

"—— the fine pluſh and velvets of the age
"Did oft for ſixpence *damn thee* from the ſtage,"—

ſays one of his eulogiſts in *Jonſonius Virbius*, 4to. 1638. Jonſon himſelf owns that *Sejanus* was damned. "It is a poem," ſays he, in his Dedication to Lord Aubigny, "that, if I well remember, in your lordſhip's ſight ſuffered no leſs violence from our people here, than the ſubject of it did from the rage of the people of Rome." His friend E. B. (probably Edmund Bolton) ſpeaking of the ſame performance, ſays,—

"But when I view'd the people's beaſtly rage,
"Bent to confound thy grave and learned toil,
"That coſt thee ſo much ſweat and ſo much oil,
"My indignation I could hardly aſſuage."

Again, in his Dedication of *Catiline* to the Earl of Pembroke, the author ſays, "Poſterity may pay your benefit the honour and

for what books had given the former; and the judgment of a great man upon this occaſion was, I think, very juſt and proper. In a converſation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of Eton, and Ben Jonſon, Sir John Suckling, who was a profeſſed admirer of Shakſpeare, had undertaken his defence againſt Ben Jonſon with ſome warmth; Mr. Hales, who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, told them,[2] *That if Mr. Shakſpeare had not read the ancients, he had likewiſe not ſtolen any thing from them; and that if he would produce any one topick finely treated by any one of them, he would undertake to ſhow ſome-*

thanks, when it ſhall know that you dare in theſe jig-given times to countenance a legitimate poem. I muſt call it ſo, *againſt all noiſe of opinion*, from whoſe crude and ayrie reports I appeal to that great and ſingular facultie of judgment in your lordſhip."

See alſo the Epilogue to *Every Man in his Humour*, by Lord Buckhurſt, quoted below in *The Account of our old Engliſh Theatres, ad finem.* To his teſtimony and that of Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, (there alſo mentioned,) may be added that of Leonard Digges in his Verſes on Shakſpeare, and of Sir Robert Howard, who ſays in the preface to his Plays, folio, 1665, (not thirty years after Ben's death,) "When I conſider how ſevere the former age has been to ſome of the *beſt* of Mr. Jonſon's never-to-be-equalled comedies, I cannot but wonder, why any poet ſhould ſpeak of former times." The truth is, that however extravagant the elogiums were that a few ſcholars gave him in their cloſets, he was not only not admired in his own time by the generality, but not even underſtood. His friend Beaumont aſſures him in a copy of verſes, that "his ſenſe is ſo deep that he will not be underſtood for three ages to come." MALONE.

[2] Mr. Hales, *who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, told* them,] In Mr. Rowe's firſt edition this paſſage runs thus:

"Mr. Hales, who had ſat ſtill for ſome time, *hearing Ben frequently reproach him with the want of learning and ignorance of the antients*, told *him at laſt*, That if Mr. Shakſpeare," &c. By the alteration, the ſubſequent part of the ſentence—"if *he* would produce," &c. is rendered ungrammatical.

MALONE.

thing upon the ſame ſubject at leaſt as well written by Shakſpeare.[3]

[3] ——*he would undertake to ſhow ſomething upon the ſame ſubject at leaſt as well written by Shakſpeare.*] I had long endeavoured in vain to find out on what authority this relation was founded; and have very lately diſcovered that Mr. Rowe probably derived his information from Dryden: for in Gildon's *Letters and Eſſays*, publiſhed in 1694, fifteen years before this Life appeared, the ſame ſtory is told; and Dryden, to whom an Eſſay in vindication of Shakſpeare is addreſſed, is appealed to by the writer as his authority. As Gildon tells the ſtory with ſome ſlight variations from the account given by Mr. Rowe, and the book in which it is found is now extremely ſcarce, I ſhall ſubjoin the paſſage in his own words:

"But to give the world ſome ſatisfaction that Shakſpeare has had as great veneration paid his excellence by men of unqueſtioned parts, as this I now expreſs for him, I ſhall give ſome account of what I have heard *from your mouth*, ſir, about the noble triumph he gained over all the ancients, by the judgment of the ableſt criticks of that time.

"The matter of fact, if my memory fail me not, was this. Mr. Hales of Eton affirmed, that he would ſhow all the poets of antiquity out-done by Shakſpeare, in all the topicks and common-places made uſe of in poetry. The enemies of Shakſpeare would by no means yield him ſo much excellence; ſo that it came to a reſolution of a trial of ſkill upon that ſubject. The place agreed on for the diſpute was Mr. Hales's chamber at Eton. A great many books were ſent down by the enemies of this poet; and on the appointed day my Lord Falkland, Sir John Suckling, and all the perſons of quality that had wit and learning, and intereſted themſelves in the quarrel, met there; and upon a thorough diſquiſition of the point, the judges choſen by agreement out of this learned and ingenious aſſembly, unanimouſly gave the preference to Shakſpeare, and the Greek and Roman poets were adjudged to vail at leaſt their glory in that, to the Engliſh Hero."

This elogium on our author is likewiſe recorded at an earlier period by Tate, probably from the ſame authority, in the preface to *The Loyal General*, quarto, 1680: "Our learned Hales was wont to aſſert, that, ſince the time of Orpheus, and the oldeſt poets, no common-place has been touched upon, where our author has not performed as well."

Dryden himſelf alſo certainly alludes to this ſtory, which he appears to have related both to Gildon and Rowe, in the follow-

To face p. 73. Vol. II.

L. Jenkins del. J. Burrell sc.

NEW PLACE,

From a Drawing in the Margin of an Ancient SURVEY, made by Order of SIR GEORGE CAREW (afterwards BARON CAREW of Clopton, and EARL of TOTNESS) and found at Clopton near Stratford upon Avon, in 1786.

Published as the Act directs by J. Rivington & Partners Octo^r 1, 1790.

The latter part of his life was ſpent, as all men of good ſenſe will wiſh theirs may be, in caſe, retirement, and the converſation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather an eſtate equal to his occaſion,[4] and, in that, to his wiſh; and is ſaid

ing paſſage of his *Eſſay of Dramatick Poeſy*, 1667; and he as well as Gildon goes ſomewhat further than Rowe in his panegyrick. After giving that fine character of our poet which Dr. Johnſon has quoted in his preface, he adds, "The conſideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eton ſay, *that there was no ſubject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it* MUCH BETTER *done by Shakſpeare*; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Jonſon, never equalled them to him in their eſteem: And in the laſt king's court [that of Charles I.] when Ben's reputation was at higheſt, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, ſet our Shakſpeare far above him."

Let *ever-memorable* Hales, if all his other merits be forgotten, be ever mentioned with honour, for his good taſte and admiration of our poet. "He was," ſays Lord Clarendon, "one of the leaſt men in the kingdom; and one of the greateſt ſcholars in Europe." See a long character of him in Clarendon's *Life*, Vol. I. p. 52. MALONE.

[4] *He had the good fortune to gather an eſtate equal to his occaſion,*] Gildon, without authority, I believe, ſays, that our author left behind him an eſtate of 300l. per ann. This was equal to at leaſt 1000l. per ann. at this day; the relative value of money, the mode of living in that age, the luxury and taxes of the preſent time, and various other circumſtances, being conſidered. But I doubt whether all his property amounted to much more than 200l. per ann. which yet was a conſiderable fortune in thoſe times. He appears from his grand-daughter's will to have poſſeſſed in Biſhopton, and Stratford Welcombe, four yard land and a half. *A yard land* is a denomination well known in Warwickſhire, and contains from 30 to 60 acres. The average therefore being 45, four yard land and a half may be eſtimated at about two hundred acres. As ſixteen years purchaſe was the common rate at which the land was ſold at that time, that is, one half leſs than at this day, we may ſuppoſe that theſe lands were let at ſeven ſhillings per acre, and produced 70l. per annum. If we rate the *New-Place* with the appurtenances, and our poet's other

to have ſpent ſome years before his death at his native Stratford.[5] His pleaſureable wit and good-

houſes in Stratford, at 60l. a year, and his houſe, &c. in the Blackfriars, (for which he paid 140l.) at 20l. a year, we have a rent-roll of 150l. per annum. Of his perſonal property it is not now poſſible to form any accurate eſtimate: but if we rate it at five hundred pounds, money then bearing an intereſt of ten per cent. Shakſpeare's total income was 200l. per ann.* In *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, which was written ſoon after the year 1600, *three hundred pounds a year* is deſcribed as an eſtate of ſuch magnitude as to cover all the defects of its poſſeſſor:

"O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults
"Look handſome in three hundred pounds a year."

MALONE.

[5] —*to have ſpent ſome years before his death at his native Stratford.*] In 1614 the greater part of the town of Stratford was conſumed by fire; but our Shakſpeare's houſe, among ſome others, eſcaped the flames. This houſe was firſt built by Sir Hugh Clopton, a younger brother of an ancient family in that neighbourhood. Sir Hugh was Sheriff of London in the reign of Richard III. and Lord Mayor in the reign of King Henry VII. By his will he bequeathed to his elder brother's ſon his manor of Clopton, &c. and his houſe, by the name of the Great Houſe in Stratford. Good part of the eſtate is yet [in 1733] in the poſſeſſion of Edward Clopton, Eſq. and Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. lineally deſcended from the elder brother of the firſt Sir Hugh.

The eſtate had now been ſold out of the Clopton family for above a century, at the time when Shakſpeare became the purchaſer: who having repaired and modelled it to his own mind, changed the name to *New-Place*, which the manſion-houſe, ſince erected upon the ſame ſpot, at this day retains. The houſe, and lands which attended it, continued in Shakſpeare's deſcendants to the time of the Reſtoration; when they were re-purchaſed by the Clopton family, and the manſion now belongs to Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. To the favour of this worthy gentleman I owe the knowledge of one particular in honour of our poet's once dwelling-houſe, of which I preſume Mr. Rowe never was apprized. When the Civil War raged in England, and King

* To Shakſpeare's income from his real and perſonal property muſt be added 200l. per ann. which he probably derived from the theatre, while he continued on the ſtage.

nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendſhip, of the gentlemen of the

Charles the Firſt's Queen was driven by the neceſſity of her affairs to make a receſs in Warwickſhire, ſhe kept her court for three weeks in New-Place. We may reaſonably ſuppoſe it then the beſt private houſe in the town; and her Majeſty preferred it to the College, which was in the poſſeſſion of the Combe family, who did not ſo ſtrongly favour the King's party. THEOBALD.

From Mr. Theobald's words the reader may be led to ſuppoſe that Henrietta Maria was obliged to take refuge from the rebels in Stratford-upon-Avon: but that was not the caſe. She marched from Newark, June 16, 1643, and entered Stratford-upon-Avon triumphantly, about the 22d of the ſame month, at the head of three thouſand foot and fifteen hundred horſe, with 150 waggons and a train of artillery. Here ſhe was met by Prince Rupert, accompanied by a large body of troops. After ſojourning about three weeks at our poet's houſe, which was then poſſeſſed by his grand-daughter Mrs. Naſh, and her huſband, the Queen went (July 13) to the plain of Keinton under Edge-hill, to meet the King, and proceeded from thence with him to Oxford, where, ſays a contemporary hiſtorian, "her coming (July 15) was rather to a triumph than a war."

Of the College above mentioned the following was the origin. John de Stratford, Biſhop of Wincheſter, in the fifth year of King Edward III. founded a Chantry conſiſting of five prieſts, one of whom was Warden, in a certain chapel adjoining to the church of Stratford on the ſouth ſide; and afterwards (in the ſeventh year of Henry VIII.) Ralph Collingwode inſtituted four choriſters, to be daily aſſiſtant in the celebration of divine ſervice there. This chantry, ſays Dugdale, ſoon after its foundation, was known by the name of *The College* of Stratford-upon-Avon.

In the 26th year of Edward III. "a houſe of ſquare ſtone" was built by Ralph de Stratford, Biſhop of London, for the habitation of the five prieſts. This houſe, or another on the ſame ſpot, is the houſe of which Mr. Theobald ſpeaks. It ſtill bears the name of "The College," and at preſent belongs to the Rev. Mr. Fullerton.

After the ſuppreſſion of religious houſes, the ſite of the college was granted by Edward VI. to John Earl of Warwick and his heirs; who being attainted in the firſt year of Queen Mary, it reverted to the crown.

Sir John Clopton, Knt. (the father of Edward Clopton, Eſq. and Sir Hugh Clopton,) who died at Stratford-upon-Avon in

neighbourhood. Amongſt them, it is a ſtory almoſt ſtill remembered in that country that he had a par-

April, 1719, purchaſed the eſtate of New-Place, &c. ſome time after the year 1685, from Sir Reginald Forſter, Bart. who married Mary, the daughter of Edward Naſh, Eſq. couſin-german to Thomas Naſh, Eſq. who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. Edward Naſh bought it, after the death of her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard, Knight. By her will, which will be found in a ſubſequent page, ſhe directed her truſtee, Henry Smith, to ſell the New-Place, &c. (after the death of her huſband,) and to make the firſt offer of it to her couſin Edward Naſh, who purchaſed it accordingly. His ſon Thomas Naſh, whom for the ſake of diſtinction I ſhall call the younger, having died without iſſue, in Auguſt, 1652, Edward Naſh by his will, made on the 16th of March, 1678-9, deviſed the principal part of his property to his daughter Mary, and her huſband Reginald Forſter, Eſq. afterwards Sir Reginald Forſter; but in conſequence of the teſtator's only referring to a deed of ſettlement executed three days before, without reciting the ſubſtance of it, no particular mention of New-Place is made in his will. After Sir John Clopton had bought it from Sir Reginald Forſter, he gave it by deed to his younger ſon, Sir Hugh, who pulled down our poet's houſe, and built one more elegant on the ſame ſpot.

In May, 1742, when Mr. Garrick, Mr. Macklin, and Mr. Delane viſited Stratford, they were hoſpitably entertained under Shakſpeare's mulberry-tree, by Sir Hugh Clopton. He was a barriſter at law, was knighted by George the Firſt, and died in the 80th year of his age, in Dec. 1751. His nephew, Edward Clopton, the ſon of his elder brother Edward, lived till June, 1753.

The only remaining perſon of the Clopton family now living (1788), as I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, is Mrs. Partheriche, daughter and heireſs of the ſecond Edward Clopton above mentioned. "She reſides," he adds, "at the family manſion at Clopton near Stratford, is now a widow, and never had any iſſue."

The New Place was ſold by Henry Talbot, Eſq. ſon-in-law and executor of Sir Hugh Clopton, in or ſoon after the year 1752, to the Rev. Mr. Gaſtrell, a man of large fortune, who reſided in it but a few years, in conſequence of a diſagreement with the inhabitants of Stratford. Every houſe in that town that is let or valued at more than 40s. a year, is aſſeſſed by the overſeers, according to its worth and the ability of the occupier,

ticular intimacy with Mr. Combe,[6] an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and uſury: it

to pay a monthly rate toward the maintenance of the poor. As Mr. Gaſtrell reſided part of the year at Lichfield, he thought he was aſſeſſed too highly; but being very properly compelled by the magiſtrates of Stratford to pay the whole of what was levied on him, on the principle that his houſe was occupied by his ſervants in his abſence, he peeviſhly declared, that *that* houſe ſhould never be aſſeſſed again; and ſoon afterwards pulled it down, ſold the materials, and left the town. Wiſhing, as it ſhould ſeem, to be "damn'd to everlaſting fame," he had ſome time before cut down Shakſpeare's celebrated mulberry-tree, to ſave himſelf the trouble of ſhowing it to thoſe whoſe admiration of our great poet led them to viſit the poetick ground on which it ſtood.

That Shakſpeare planted this tree, is as well authenticated as any thing of that nature can be. The Rev. Mr. Davenport informs me, that Mr. Hugh Taylor, (the father of his clerk,) who is now eighty-five years old, and an alderman of Warwick, where he at preſent reſides, ſays, he lived when a boy at the next houſe to New-Place; that his family had inhabited the houſe for almoſt three hundred years; that it was tranſmitted from father to ſon during the laſt and the preſent century; that this tree (of the fruit of which he had often eaten in his younger days, ſome of its branches hanging over his father's garden,) was planted by Shakſpeare; and that till this was planted, there was no mulberry-tree in that neighbourhood. Mr. Taylor adds, that he was frequently, when a boy, at New-Place, and that this tradition was preſerved in the Clopton family, as well as in his own.

There were ſcarce any trees of this ſpecies in England till the year 1609, when by order of King James many hundred thouſand young mulberry-trees were imported from France, and ſent into the different counties, with a view to the feeding of *ſilk*-worms, and the encouragement of the ſilk manufacture. *See* Camdeni *Annales ab anno* 1603 *ad annum* 1623, publiſhed by Smith, quarto, 1691, p. 7; and Howes's Abridgment of Stowe's *Chronicle*, edit. 1618, p. 503, where we have a more particular account of this tranſaction than in the larger work. A very few mulberry-trees had been planted before; for we are told, that in the preceding year a gentleman of Picardy, Monſieur Foreſt, "kept greate ſtore of Engliſh ſilkworms at Greenwich, the which the king with great pleaſure came often to ſee them worke; and of their ſilke he cauſed *a piece of taffata* to be made."

happened, that in a pleaſant converſation amongſt their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakſpeare in a laughing manner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to out-live him; and ſince he could not know what might be ſaid of him when he was dead, he deſired it might

Shakſpeare was perhaps the only inhabitant of Stratford, whoſe buſineſs called him annually to London; and probably on his return from thence in the ſpring of the year 1609, he planted this tree.

As a ſimilar enthuſiaſm to that which with ſuch diligence has ſought after Virgil's tomb, may lead my countrymen to viſit the ſpot where our great bard ſpent ſeveral years of his life, and died; it may gratify them to be told that the ground on which *The New-Place* once ſtood, is now a garden belonging to Mr. Charles Hunt, an eminent attorney, and town-clerk of Stratford. Every Engliſhman will, I am ſure, concur with me in wiſhing that it may enjoy perpetual verdure and fertility:

In this retreat our SHAKSPEARE's godlike mind
With matchleſs ſkill ſurvey'd all human kind.
Here may each ſweet that bleſt Arabia knows,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the roſe,
To lateſt time, their balmy odours fling,
And Nature here diſplay eternal ſpring! MALONE.

* ——*that he had a particular intimacy with* Mr. Combe,] This Mr. John Combe I take to be the ſame, who, by Dugdale, in his *Antiquities of Warwickſhire*, is ſaid to have died in the year 1614, and for whom at the upper end of the quire of the guild of the holy croſs at Stratford, a fair monument is erected, having a ſtatue thereon cut in alabaſter, and in a gown, with this epitaph: "Here lyeth interred the body of John Combe, Eſq. who departing this life the 10th day of July, 1614, bequeathed by his laſt will and teſtament theſe ſums enſuing, annually to be paid for ever; viz. xx. s. for two ſermons to be preach'd in this church, and vi. l. xiii. s. iv. d. to buy ten gownes for ten poore people within the borough of Stratford; and 100l. to be lent to fifteen poore tradeſmen of the ſame borough, from three years to three years, changing the parties every third year, at the rate of fifty ſhillings *per annum*, the which increaſe he appointed to be diſtributed towards the relief of the almes-poor there." The donation has all the air of a rich and ſagacious uſurer.

THEOBALD.

be done immediately; upon which Shakſpeare gave him theſe four verſes:

" *Ten in the hundred* lies here ingrav'd;[7]
" 'Tis a hundred to ten his ſoul is not ſav'd:
" If any man aſk, Who lies in this tomb?
" Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe."[8]

[7] *Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd;*] In *The More the Merrier, containing Three Score and odd headleſs Epigrams, ſhot, (like the Fooles Bolts) among you, light where they will:* By H. P. Gent. &c. 1608, I find the following couplet, which is almoſt the ſame as the two beginning lines of this *Epitaph on John-a-Combe:*

" FENERATORIS EPITAPHIUM.

" Ten in the hundred lies under this ſtone,
" And a hundred to ten to the devil he's gone."

Again, in *Wit's Interpreter*, 8vo. 3d edit. 1671, p. 298:

" Here lies at leaſt ten in the hundred,
" Shackled up both hands and feet,
" That at ſuch as lent mony gratis wondred,
" The gain of uſury was ſo ſweet:
" But thus being now of life bereav'n,
" 'Tis a hundred to ten he's ſcarce gone to heav'n."

STEEVENS.

So, in Camden's *Remains*, 1614:

" Here lyes ten in the hundred,
" In the ground faſt ramm'd;
" 'Tis an hundred to ten
" But his ſoule is damn'd." MALONE.

[8] *Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my* John-a-Combe.] The Rev. Francis Peck, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton*, 4to. 1740, p. 223, has introduced another epitaph imputed (on what authority is unknown) to Shakſpeare. It is on *Tom-a-Combe*, alias *Thin-beard*, brother to this *John*, who is mentioned by Mr. Rowe:

" Thin in beard, and thick in purſe;
" Never man beloved worſe;
" He went to the grave with many a curſe:
" The devil and he had both one nurſe." STEEVENS.

I ſuſpect that theſe lines were ſent to Mr. Peck by ſome perſon that meant to impoſe upon him. It appears from Mr. John

But the ſharpneſs of the ſatire is ſaid to have ſtung the man ſo ſeverely, that he never forgave it.[9]

Combe's will, that his brother Thomas was dead in 1614. John deviſed the greater part of his real and perſonal eſtate to his *nephew* Thomas Combe, with whom Shakſpeare was certainly on good terms, having bequeathed him his ſword.

Since I wrote the above, I find from the Regiſter of Stratford, that Mr. Thomas Combe (the brother of John) was buried there, Jan. 22, 1609-10. MALONE.

[9] ——*the ſharpneſs of the ſatire is ſaid to have ſtung the man ſo ſeverely, that he never forgave it.*] I take this opportunity to avow my diſbelief that Shakſpeare was the author of Mr. Combe's Epitaph, or that it was written by any other perſon at the requeſt of that gentleman. If Betterton the player did really viſit Warwickſhire for the ſake of collecting anecdotes relative to our author, perhaps he was too eaſily ſatisfied with ſuch as fell in his way, without making any rigid ſearch into their authenticity. It appears alſo from a following copy of this inſcription, that it was not aſcribed to Shakſpeare ſo early as two years after his death. Mr. Reed of Staple-Inn obligingly pointed it out to me in the *Remains*, &c. of Richard Braithwaite, 1618; and as his edition of our epitaph varies in ſome meaſure from the latter one publiſhed by Mr. Rowe, I ſhall not heſitate to tranſcribe it:

"Upon one *John Combe* of *Stratford* upon *Avon*, a notable Uſurer, faſtened upon a Tombe that he had cauſed to be built in his Life-Time:

"Ten in the hundred muſt lie in his grave,
"But a hundred to ten whether God will him have:
"Who then muſt be interr'd in this tombe?
"Oh (quoth the divill) my *John a Combe*."

Here it may be obſerved that, ſtrictly ſpeaking, this is no jocular epitaph, but a malevolent prediction; and Braithwaite's copy is ſurely more to be depended on (being procured in or before the year 1618) than that delivered to Betterton or Rowe, almoſt a century afterwards. It has been already remarked, that two of the lines ſaid to have been printed on this occaſion, were printed as an epigram in 1608, by H. P. Gent. and are likewiſe found in Camden's *Remains*, 1614. I may add, that a uſurer's ſolicitude to know what would be reported of him when he was dead, is not a very probable circumſtance; neither was Shakſpeare of a diſpoſition to compoſe an invective, at once ſo bitter and uncharitable, during *a pleaſant converſation among the com-*

He died in the 53d year of his age,[1] and was bu-

mon friends of himſelf and a gentleman, with whoſe family he lived in ſuch friendſhip, that at his death he bequeathed his ſword to Mr. Thomas Combe as a legacy. A miſer's monument indeed, conſtructed during his life-time, might be regarded as a challenge to ſatire; and we cannot wonder that anonymous lampoons ſhould have been affixed to the marble deſigned to convey the character of ſuch a being to poſterity.—I hope I may be excuſed for this attempt to vindicate Shakſpeare from the imputation of having poiſoned the hour of confidence and feſtivity, by producing the ſevereſt of all cenſures on one of his company. I am, unwilling, in ſhort, to think he could ſo wantonly and ſo publickly have expreſſed his doubts concerning the ſalvation of one of his fellow-creatures. STEEVENS.

Since the above obſervations firſt appeared, (in a note to the edition of our author's Poems which I publiſhed in 1780,) I have obtained an additional proof of what has been advanced, in vindication of Shakſpeare on this ſubject. It occurred to me that the will of John Combe might poſſibly throw ſome light on this matter, and an examination of it ſome years ago furniſhed me with ſuch evidence as renders the ſtory recorded in Braithwaite's *Remains* very doubtful: and ſtill more ſtrongly proves that, whoever was the author of this epitaph, it is highly improbable that it ſhould have been written by Shakſpeare.

The very firſt direction given by Mr. Combe in his will is, concerning a tomb to be erected to him *after his death*. "My will is, that a convenient tomb of the value of threeſcore pounds ſhall by my executors hereafter named, out of my goods and chattels firſt rayſed, within one year after my deceaſe, be ſet over me." So much for Braithwaite's account of his having erected his own tomb in his life-time. That he had any quarrel with our author, or that Shakſpeare had by any act *ſtung him ſo ſeverely that Mr. Combe never forgave him*, appears equally void of foundation; for by his will he bequeaths "to Mr. William Shakſpere Five Pounds." It is probable that they lived in intimacy, and that Mr. Combe had made ſome purchaſe from our poet; for he deviſes to his brother George, "the cloſe or grounds known by the name of Parſon's Cloſe, *alias Shakſpere's Cloſe*." It muſt be owned that Mr. Combe's will is dated Jan. 28, 1612-13, about eighteen months before his death; and therefore the evidence now produced is not abſolutely deciſive, as he might have erected a tomb, and a rupture might have happened between him and Shakſpeare, after the making of this will: but it is very

ried on the north ſide of the chancel, in the great

improbable that any ſuch rupture ſhould have taken place; for if the ſuppoſed cauſe of offence had happened ſubſequently to the execution of the inſtrument, it is to be preſumed that he would have revoked the legacy to Shakſpeare: and the ſame argument may be urged with reſpect to the direction concerning his tomb.

Mr. Combe by his will bequeaths to Mr. Francis Collins, the elder, of the borough of Warwick, (who appears as a legatee and ſubſcribing witneſs to Shakſpeare's will, and therefore may be preſumed a common friend,) ten pounds; to his godſon John Collins, (the ſon of Francis,) ten pounds; to Mrs. Suſanna Collins (probably godmother to our poet's eldeſt daughter) ſix pounds, thirteen ſhillings, and four-pence; to Mr. Henry Walker, (father to Shakſpeare's godſon,) twenty ſhillings; to the poor of Stratford twenty pounds; and to his ſervants, in various legacies, one hundred and ten pounds. He was buried at Stratford, July 12, 1614, and his will was proved, Nov. 10, 1615.

Our author, at the time of making *his* will, had it not in his power to ſhow any teſtimony of his regard for Mr. Combe, that gentleman being then dead; but that he continued a friendly correſpondence with his family to the laſt, appears evidently (as Mr. Steevens has obſerved) from his leaving his ſword to Mr. Thomas Combe, the nephew, reſiduary legatee, and one of the executors of John.

On the whole we may conclude, that the lines preſerved by Rowe, and inſerted with ſome variation in Braithwaite's *Romains*, which the latter has mentioned to have been affixed to Mr. Combe's tomb in his life-time, were not written till after Shakſpeare's death; for the executors, who did not prove the will till Nov. 1615, could not well have erected "a fair monument" of conſiderable expence for thoſe times, till the middle or perhaps the end of the year 1616, in the April of which year our poet died. Between that time and the year 1618, when Braithwaite's book appeared, ſome one of thoſe perſons (we may preſume) who had ſuffered by Mr. Combe's ſeverity, gave vent to his feelings in the ſatirical compoſition preſerved by Rowe; part of which, we have ſeen, was borrowed from epitaphs that had already been printed.—That Mr. Combe was a money-lender, may be inferred from a clauſe in his will, in which he mentions his "good and juſt debtors;" to every one of whom he remits, "twenty ſhillings for every twenty pounds, and ſo after this rate

church at Stratford, where a monument is placed

for a greater or leſſer debt," on their paying in to his executors what they owe.

Mr. Combe married Mrs. Roſe Clopton, Auguſt 27, 1560; and therefore was probably, when he died, eighty years old. His property, from the deſcription of it, appears to have been conſiderable.

In juſtice to this gentleman it ſhould be remembered, that in the language of Shakſpeare's age an *uſurer* did not mean one who took exorbitant, but any, intereſt or uſance for money; which many then conſidered as criminal. The opprobious terms by which ſuch a perſon was diſtinguiſhed, *Ten in the hundred*, proves this; for *ten* per cent, was the ordinary intereſt of money. See Shakſpeare's will.—Sir Philip Sidney directs by his will, made in 1586, that Sir Francis Walſingham ſhall put four thouſand pounds which the teſtator bequeathed to his daughter, "to the beſt behooſe either by purchaſe of land or leaſe, or ſome other *good and godly* uſe, but in no caſe to let it out for any *uſury* at all." MALONE.

[1] *He died in the 53d year of his age,*] He died on his birthday, April 23, 1616, and had exactly completed his fifty-ſecond year. From Du Cange's Perpetual Almanack, Gloſs. in v. *Annus*, (making allowance for the different ſtyle which then prevailed in England from that on which Du Cange's calculation was formed,) it appears, that the 23d of April in that year was a Tueſday.

No account has been tranſmitted to us of the malady which at ſo early a period of life deprived England of its brighteſt ornament. The private note-book of his ſon-in-law Dr. Hall,* containing a ſhort ſtate of the caſes of his patients, was a few years ago put into my hands by my friend, the late Dr. Wright; and as Dr. Hall married our poet's daughter in the year 1607, and undoubtedly attended Shakſpeare in his laſt illneſs, being then forty years old, I had hopes this book might have enabled me to gratify the publick curioſity on this ſubject. But unluckily the earlieſt caſe recorded by Hall, is dated in 1617. He had probably filled ſome other book with memorandums of his practice in preceding years; which by ſome contingency may hereafter be found, and inform poſterity of the particular circum-

* Dr. Hall's pocket-book after his death fell into the hands of a ſurgeon of Warwick, who publiſhed a tranſlation of it, (with ſome additions of his own) under the title of *Select Obſervations on the Engliſh Bodies of eminent Perſons, in deſperate Diſeaſes*, &c. The third edition was printed in 1683.

in the wall.[2] On his grave-ſtone underneath is,—

" Good friend,[3] for Jeſus' ſake forbear
" To dig the duſt incloſed here.
" Bleſt be the man that ſpares theſe ſtones,
" And curſt be he that moves my bones."[4]

ſtances that attended the death of our great poet.—From the 34th page of this book, which contains an account of a diſorder under which his daughter Elizabeth laboured (about the year 1624,) and of the method of cure, it appears, that ſhe was his only daughter; [Elizabeth Hall, filia mea *unica*, tortura oris defædata.] In the beginning of April in that year ſhe viſited London, and returned to Stratford on the 22d; an enterpriſe at that time " of great pith and moment."

While we lament that our incomparable poet was ſnatched from the world at a time when his faculties were in their full vigour, and before he was " declined into the vale of years," let us be thankful that " this ſweeteſt child of Fancy" did not periſh while ſhe yet lay in the cradle. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1564; and I have this moment learned from the Regiſter of that town that the plague broke out there on the 30th of the following June, and raged with ſuch violence between that day and the laſt day of December, that two hundred and thirty-eight perſons were in that period carried to the grave, of which number probably 216 died of that malignant diſtemper; and one only of the whole number reſided, not in Stratford, but in the neighbouring town of Welcombe. From the 237 inhabitants of Stratford, whoſe names appear in the Regiſter, twenty-one are to be ſubducted, who, it may be preſumed, would have died in ſix months, in the ordinary courſe of nature; for in the five preceding years, reckoning, according to the ſtyle of that time, from March 25, 1559, to March 25, 1564, two hundred and twenty one-perſons were buried at Stratford, of whom 210 were townſmen: that is, of theſe latter 42 died each year, at an average. Suppoſing one in thirty-five to have died annually, the total number of the inhabitants of Stratford at that period was 1470; and conſequently the plague in the laſt ſix months of the year 1564 carried off more than a ſeventh part of them Fortunately for mankind it did not reach the houſe in which the infant Shakſpeare lay; for not one of that name appears in the dead liſt.—May we ſuppoſe, that, like Horace, he lay ſecure and fearleſs in the midſt of contagion and death, protected by the

Muſes to whom his future life was to be devoted, and covered over—

" ——————— ſacra
" Lauroque, collataque myrto,
" Non ſine Diis animoſus infans." MALONE.

[a] ——*where a monument is placed in the wall.*] He is repreſented under an arch, in a ſitting poſture, a cuſhion ſpread before him, with a pen in his right hand, and his left reſted on a ſcroll of paper. The following Latin diſtich is engraved under the cuſhion:

Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet.

THEOBALD.

The firſt ſyllable in *Socratem* is here made ſhort, which cannot be allowed. Perhaps we ſhould read *Sophoclem*. Shakſpeare is then appoſitely compared with a dramatick author among the ancients: but ſtill it ſhould be remembered that the elogium is leſſened while the metre is reformed; and it is well known that ſome of our early writers of Latin poetry were uncommonly negligent in their proſody, eſpecially in proper names. The thought of this diſtich, as Mr. Tollet obſerves, might have been taken from *The Faëry Queene* of Spenſer, B. II. c. ix. ſt. 48, and c. x. ſt. 3.

To this Latin inſcription on Shakſpeare ſhould be added the lines which are found underneath it on his monument:

" Stay, paſſenger, why doſt thou go ſo faſt?
" Read, if thou canſt, whom envious death hath plac'd
" Within this monument; Shakſpeare, with whom
" Quick nature dy'd; whoſe name doth deck the tomb
" Far more than coſt; ſince all that he hath writ
" Leaves living art but page to ſerve his wit."

" Obiit An°. Dni. 1616.
æt. 53, die 23 Apri. STEEVENS.

It appears from the Verſes of Leonard Digges, that our author's monument was erected before the year 1623. It has been engraved by Vertue, and done in mezzotinto by Miller.

A writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXIX. p. 267, ſays, there is as ſtrong a reſemblance between the buſt at Stratford, and the portrait of our author prefixed to the firſt folio edition of his plays, " as can well be between a ſtatue and a picture." To me (and I have viewed it ſeveral times with a good deal of attention) it appeared in a very different light. When I went laſt to Stratford, I carried with me the only genuine prints of Shakſpeare that were then extant, and I could not trace any reſemblance between them and this figure. There is a pertneſs

in the countenance of the latter totally differing from that placid compoſure and thoughtful gravity, ſo perceptible in his original Portrait and his beſt prints. Our poet's monument having been erected by his ſon-in-law, Dr. Hall, the ſtatuary probably had the aſſiſtance of ſome picture, and failed only from want of ſkill to copy it.

Mr. Granger obſerves, (*Biog. Hiſt.* Vol. I. p. 259,) that "*it has been ſaid* there never was an original portrait of Shakſpeare, but that Sir Thomas Clarges after his death cauſed a portrait to be drawn for him from a perſon who nearly reſembled him." This entertaining writer was a great collector of anecdotes, but not always very ſcrupulous in inquiring into the authenticity of the information which he procured; for this improbable tale, I find, on examination, ſtands only on the inſertion of an anonymous writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, for Auguſt, 1759, who boldly "affirmed it as an abſolute fact;" but being afterwards publickly called upon to produce his authority, never produced any. There is the ſtrongeſt reaſon therefore to preſume it a forgery.

"Mr. Walpole (adds Mr. Granger) informs me, that the only original picture of Shakſpeare is that which belonged to Mr. Keck, from whom it paſſed to Mr. Nicoll, whoſe only daughter married the Marquis of Caernarvon" [now Duke of Chandos].

From this picture, his Grace, at my requeſt, very obligingly permitted a drawing to be made by that excellent artiſt Mr. Ozias Humphry; and from that drawing the print prefixed to the preſent edition has been engraved.

In the manuſcript notes of the late Mr. Oldys, this portrait is ſaid to have been "painted by old Cornelius Janſen." "Others," he adds, "ſay, that it was done by Richard Burbage the player;" and in another place he aſcribes it to "John Taylor, the player." This Taylor, it is ſaid in *The Critical Review* for 1770, left it by *will* to Sir William D'Avenant. But unluckily there was no player of the chriſtian and ſurname of John Taylor, contemporary with Shakſpeare. The player who performed in Shakſpeare's company, was Joſeph Taylor. There was, however, a *painter* of the name of *John Taylor*, to whom in his early youth it is barely poſſible that we may have been indebted for the only original portrait of our author; for in the Picture-Gallery at Oxford are two portraits of Taylor the Water-Poet, and on each of them "*John Taylor* pinx. *1655*." There appears ſome reſemblance of *manner* between theſe portraits and the picture of Shakſpeare in the Duke of Chandos's collection. That picture (I expreſs the opinion of Sir Joſhua Reynolds) has not the leaſt air of Cornelius Janſen's performances.

That this picture was once in the poſſeſſion of Sir Wm. D'Ave-

nant is highly probable; but it is much more likely to have been *purchaſed* by him from ſome of the players after the theatres were ſhut up by authority, and the veterans of the ſtage were reduced to great diſtreſs, than to have been bequeathed to him by the perſon who painted it; in whoſe cuſtody it is improbable that it ſhould have remained. Sir William D'Avenant appears to have died inſolvent. There is no Will of his in the Prerogative-Office; but adminiſtration of his effects was granted to John Otway, his *principal creditor*, in May 1668. After his death, Betterton the actor bought it, probably at a publick ſale of his effects. While it was in Betterton's poſſeſſion, it was engraved by Vandergucht, for Mr. Rowe's edition of Shakſpeare, in 1709. Betterton made no will, and died very indigent. He had a large collection of portraits of actors in crayons, which were bought at the ſale of his goods, by Bullfinch the Printſeller, who ſold them to one Mr. Sykes. The portrait of Shakſpeare was purchaſed by Mrs. Barry the actreſs, who ſold it afterwards for 40 guineas to Mr. Robert Keck. In 1719, while it was in Mr. Keck's poſſeſſion, an engraving was made from it by Vertue: a large half-ſheet. Mr. Nicoll of Colney-Hatch, Middleſex, marrying the heireſs of the Keck family, this picture devolved to him; and while in his poſſeſſion, it was, in 1747, engraved by Houbraken for Birch's *Illuſtrious Heads*. By the marriage of the Duke of Chandos with the daughter of Mr. Nicoll, it became his Grace's property.

Sir Godfrey Kneller painted a picture of our author, which he preſented to Dryden, but from what picture he copied, I am unable to aſcertain, as I have never ſeen Kneller's picture. The poet repaid him by an elegant copy of Verſes.—See his Poems, Vol. II. p. 231, edit. 1743:

" Shakſpeare, thy gift, I place before my ſight,
" With awe I aſk his bleſſing as I write;
" With reverence look on his majeſtick face,
" Proud to be leſs, but of his godlike race.
" His ſoul inſpires me, while thy praiſe I write,
" And I like Teucer under Ajax fight:
" Bids thee, through me, be bold; with dauntleſs breaſt
" Contemn the bad, and emulate the beſt:
" Like his, thy criticks in the attempt are loſt,
" When moſt they rail, know then, they envy moſt."

It appears from a circumſtance mentioned by Dryden, that theſe verſes were written after the year 1683: probably after Rymer's book had appeared in 1693. Dryden having made no will, and his wife Lady Elizabeth renouncing, adminiſtration was granted on the 10th of June, 1700, to his ſon Charles, who was drowned in the Thames near Windſor in 1704. His younger

brother, Eraſmus, ſucceeded to the title of Baronet, and died without iſſue in 1711; but I know not what became of his effects, or where this picture is now to be found.

About the year 1725 a mezzotinto of Shakſpeare was ſcraped by Simon, ſaid to be done from an original picture painted by Zouſt or Soeſt, then in the poſſeſſion of T. Wright, painter, in Covent Garden. The earlieſt known picture painted by Zouſt in England, was done in 1657; ſo that if he ever painted a picture of Shakſpeare, it muſt have been a copy. It could not however have been made from D'Avenant's picture, (unleſs the painter took very great liberties,) for the whole air, dreſs, diſpoſition of the hair, &c. are different. I have lately ſeen a picture in the poſſeſſion of —— Douglas, Eſq. at Teddington near Twickenham, which is, I believe, the very picture from which Simon's mezzotinto was made. It is on canvas, (about 24 inches by 20,) and ſomewhat ſmaller than the life.

The earlieſt print of our poet that appeared, is that in the title-page of the firſt folio edition of his works, 1623, engraved by Martin Droeſhout. On this print the following lines, addreſſed TO THE READER, were written by Ben Jonſon:

"This figure that thou here ſeeſt put,
" It was for gentle Shakſpeare cut;
" Wherein the graver had a ſtrife
" With nature, to out-do the life.
" O, could he but have drawn his wit
" As well in braſs, as he hath hit
" His face, the print would then ſurpaſs
" All that was ever writ in braſs;
" But ſince he cannot, reader, look
" Not on his picture, but his book."

Droeſhout engraved alſo the heads of John Fox the martyrologiſt, Montjoy Blount, ſon of Charles Blount Earl of Devonſhire, William Fairfax, who fell at the ſiege of Frankendale in 1621, and John Howſon, Biſhop of Durham. The portrait of Biſhop Howſon is at Chriſt Church, Oxford. By comparing any of theſe prints (the two latter of which are well executed) with the original pictures from whence the engravings were made, a better judgment might be formed of the fidelity of our author's portrait, as exhibited by this engraver, than from Jonſon's aſſertion, that "in this figure

" —— the graver had a ſtrife
" With nature to out-do the life;"

a compliment which in the books of that age was paid to ſo many engravers, that nothing deciſive can be inferred from it — It does not appear from what picture this engraving was made: but from the dreſs, and the ſingular diſpoſition of the hair, &c.

it undoubtedly was engraved from a picture, and probably a very ordinary one. There is no other way of accounting for the great difference between this print of Droeſhout's, and his ſpirited portraits of Fairfax and Biſhop Howſon, but by ſuppoſing that the picture of Shakſpeare from which he copied was a very coarſe performance.

The next print in point of time is, according to Mr. Walpole and Mr. Granger, that executed by J. Payne, a ſcholar of Simon Paſs, in 1634; with a laurel-branch in the poet's left-hand. A print of Shakſpeare by ſo excellent an engraver as Payne, would probably exhibit a more perfect repreſentation of him than any other of thoſe times; but I much doubt whether any ſuch ever exiſted. Mr. Granger, I apprehend, has erroneouſly attributed to Payne the head done by Marſhall in 1640, (apparently from Droeſhout's larger print,) which is prefixed to a ſpurious edition of Shakſpeare's Poems publiſhed in that year. In Marſhall's print the poet *has a laurel branch in his left hand.* Neither Mr. Walpole, nor any of the other great collectors of prints, are poſſeſſed of, or ever ſaw, any print of Shakſpeare by Payne, as far as I can learn.

Two other prints only remain to be mentioned; one engraved by Vertue in 1721, for Mr. Pope's edition of our author's plays in quarto; ſaid to be engraved from an original picture in the poſſeſſion of the Earl of Oxford; and another, a mezzotinto, by Earlom, prefixed to an edition of *King Lear*, in 1770; ſaid to be done from an original by Cornelius Janſen, in the collection of Charles Jennens, Eſq. but Mr. Granger juſtly obſerves, "as it is dated in 1610, before Janſen was in England, it is highly probable that it was not painted by him, at leaſt, that he did not paint it as a portrait of Shakſpeare."

Moſt of the other prints of Shakſpeare that have appeared, were copied from ſome or other of thoſe which I have mentioned.

MALONE.

"The portrait palmed upon Mr. Pope" (I uſe the words of the late Mr. Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Langbaine,) "for an original of Shakſpeare, from which he had his fine plate engraven, is evidently a juvenile portrait of King James I." I am no judge in theſe matters, but only deliver an opinion, which if ill-grounded may be eaſily overthrown. The portrait, to me at leaſt, has no traits of Shakſpeare. STEEVENS.

[2] *On his grave-ſtone underneath is, Good friend,* &c.] This epitaph is expreſſed in the following uncouth mixture of ſmall and capital letters:

"Good Frend for Ieſus SAKE forbeare
"To digg T-E Duſt EncloAſed HERe
"Bleſe be ŦE Man ŧ ſpares ŦEs Stones
"And curſt be He ŧ moves my Bones." STEEVENS.

[4] *And curſt be he that moves my bones.*] It is uncertain whether this epitaph was written by Shakſpeare himſelf, or by one of his friends after his death. The imprecation contained in this laſt line, was perhaps ſuggeſted by an apprehenſion that our author's remains might ſhare the ſame fate with thoſe of the reſt of his countrymen, and be added to the immenſe pile of human bones depoſited in the charnel-houſe at Stratford. This, however, is mere conjecture; for ſimilar execrations are found in many ancient Latin epitaphs.

Mr. Steevens has juſtly mentioned it as a ſingular circumſtance, that Shakſpeare does not appear to have written any verſes on his contemporaries, either in praiſe of the living, or in honour of the dead. I once imagined that he had mentioned Spenſer with kindneſs in one of his Sonnets; but have lately diſcovered that the Sonnet to which I allude, was written by Richard Barnefield. If, however, the following epitaphs be genuine, (and indeed the latter is much in Shakſpeare's manner,) he in two inſtances overcame that modeſt diffidence, which ſeems to have ſuppoſed the elogium of his humble muſe of no value.

In a Manuſcript volume of poems by William Herrick and others, in the hand-writing of the time of Charles I. which is among Rawlinſon's Collections in the Bodleian Library, is the following epitaph, aſcribed to our poet:

"AN EPITAPH.

"When God was pleas'd, the world unwilling yet,
"Elias James to nature payd his debt,
"And here repoſeth: as he liv'd, he dyde;
"The ſaying in him ſtrongly verifide,—
"Such life, ſuch death: then, the known truth to tell,
"He liv'd a godly life, and dyde as well.
"WM. SHAKSPEARE."

There was formerly a family of the ſurname of *James* at Stratford. Anne, the wife of *Richard James*, was buried there on the ſame day with our poet's widow; and Margaret, the daughter of *John James*, died there in April, 1616.

A monumental inſcription "of a better leer," and ſaid to be written by our author, is preſerved in a collection of Epitaphs, at the end of the Viſitation of Salop, taken by Sir William Dugdale in the year 1664, now remaining in the College of Arms, C. 35, fol. 20; a tranſcript of which Sir Iſaac Heard, Garter, Principal King at Arms, has obligingly tranſmitted to me.

Among the monuments in Tongue church, in the county of Salop, is one erected in remembrance of Sir Thomas Stanley, Knight, who died, as I imagine, about the year 1600. In the Viſitation-book it is thus deſcribed by Sir William Dugdale:

" On the north ſide of the chancell ſtands a very ſtately tombe, ſupported with Corinthian columnes. It hath two figures of men in armour, thereon lying, the one below the arches and columnes, and the other above them, and this epitaph upon it.

" Thomas Stanley, Knight, ſecond ſon of Edward Earle of Derby, Lord Stanley and Strange, deſcended from the famielie of the Stanleys, married Margaret Vernon, one of the daughters and co-heires of Sir George Vernon of Nether-Haddon, in the county of Derby, Knight, by whom he had iſſue two ſons, Henry and Edward. Henry died an infant; Edward ſurvived, to whom thoſe lordſhips deſcended; and married the lady Lucie Percie, ſecond daughter of the Earle of Northumberland: by her he had iſſue ſeaven daughters. She and her foure daughters, Arabella, Marie, Alice, and Priſcilla, are interred under a monument in the church of Waltham in the county of Eſſex. Thomas, her ſon, died in his infancy, and is buried in the pariſh church of Winwich in the county of Lancaſter. The other three, Petronilla, Frances, and Veneſia, are yet living.

Theſe following verſes were made by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, the late famous tragedian:

" *Written upon the eaſt end of this tombe.*

" Aſke who lyes here, but do not weepe;
" He is not dead, he doth but ſleepe.
" This ſtony regiſter is for his bones,
" His fame is more perpetual than theſe ſtones:
" And his own goodneſs, with himſelf being gone,
" Shall live, when earthly monument is none."

" *Written upon the weſt end thereof.*

" Not monumental ſtone preſerves our fame,
" Nor ſkye-aſpiring pyramids our name.
" The memory of him for whom this ſtands,
" Shall out-live marble, and defacers' hands.
" When all to time's conſumption ſhall be given,
" Stanley, for whom this ſtands, ſhall ſtand in heaven."

The laſt line of this epitaph, though the worſt, bears very ſtrong marks of the hand of Shakſpeare. The beginning of the firſt line, " Aſke who lyes here," reminds us of that which we have been juſt examining: " *If any man aſk, who lies in this tomb,*" &c.—And in the fifth line we find a thought which our poet has alſo introduced in *King Henry VIII:*

" Ever belov'd and loving may his rule be!
" And, when old time ſhall lead him to his grave,
" *Goodneſs and he fill up one monument!*"

He had three daughters,[5] of which two lived to be married; Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney,[6] by whom ſhe had three ſons, who all died

This epitaph muſt have been written after the year 1600, for Venetia Stanley, who afterwards was the wife of Sir Kenelm Digby, was born in that year. With a view to aſcertain its date more preciſely, the churches of Great and Little Waltham have been examined for the monument ſaid to have been erected to Lady Lucy Stanley and her four daughters, but in vain; for no trace of it remains: nor could the time of their reſpective deaths be aſcertained, the regiſters of thoſe pariſhes being loſt.—Sir William Dugdale was born in Warwickſhire, was bred at the free-ſchool of Coventry, and in the year 1625 purchaſed the manor of Blythe in that county, where he then ſettled and afterwards ſpent a great part of his life: ſo that his teſtimony reſpecting this epitaph is ſufficient to aſcertain its authenticity.

MALONE.

[5] *He had three daughters,*] In this circumſtance Mr. Rowe muſt have been mis-informed. In the Regiſter of Stratford, no mention is made of any daughter of our author's but Suſanna and Judith. He had indeed three *children*; the two already mentioned, and a ſon, named Hamnet, of whom Mr. Rowe takes no notice. He was a twin child, born at the ſame time with Judith. Hence probably the miſtake. He died in the twelfth year of his age, in 1596. MALONE.

[6] ——Judith, *the* elder, *to one Mr. Thomas Quincy,*] This alſo is a miſtake. Judith was Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. She died at Stratford-upon-Avon a few days after ſhe had completed her ſeventy-ſeventh year, and was buried there, Feb. 9, 1661-62. She was married to Mr. Quincy, who was four years younger than herſelf, on the 10th of February, 1615-16, and not as Mr. Weſt ſuppoſed, in the year 1616-17. He was led into the miſtake by the figures 1616 ſtanding nearly oppoſite to the entry concerning her marriage; but thoſe figures relate to the firſt entry in the ſubſequent month of April. The Regiſter appears thus:

February.——
3. Francis Buſhill to Iſabel Whood.
1616. 5. Rich. Sandells to Joan Ballamy.
10. Tho. Queeny to Judith Shakſpere.
April.——
14. Will. Borowes to Margaret Davies.

and all the following entries in that and a part of the enſuing page

without children; and Suſanna, who was his favourite, to Dr. John Hall, a phyſician of good reputation in that country.[7] She left one child only,

are of 1616; the year then beginning on the 25th of March. Whether the above 10 relates to the month of February or April, Judith was certainly married before her father's death: if it relates to February, ſhe was married on February 10, 1615-16; if to April, on the 10th of April 1616. From Shakſpeare's will it appears, that this match was a ſtolen one; for he ſpeaks of ſuch future "*huſband as ſhe ſhall* be married to." It is ſtrange that the ceremony ſhould have been publickly celebrated in the church of Stratford without his knowledge; and the improbability of ſuch a circumſtance might lead us to ſuppoſe that ſhe was married on the 10th of *April*, about a fortnight after the execution of her father's will. But the entry of the baptiſm of her firſt child, (Nov. 23, 1616,) as well as the entry of the marriage, aſcertain it to have taken place in February.

Mr. Weſt, without intending it, has impeached the character of this lady; for her firſt child, according to his repreſentation, muſt be ſuppoſed to have been born ſome months before her marriage; ſince among the Baptiſms I find this entry of the chriſtening of her eldeſt ſon: "1616. Nov. 23. Shakſpeare, filius Thomas Quiney, Gent." and according to Mr. Weſt ſhe was not married till the following February. This *Shakſpeare Quiney* died in his infancy at Stratford, and was buried May 8th, 1617. Judith's ſecond ſon, *Richard*, was baptized on February 9th, 1617-18. He died at Stratford in Feb. 1638-9, in the 21ſt year of his age, and was buried there on the 26th of that month. Her third ſon, *Thomas*, was baptized Auguſt 29, 1619, and was buried alſo at Stratford, January 28, 1638-9. There had been a plague in the town in the preceding ſummer, that carried off about fifty perſons. MALONE.

[7] *Dr.* John Hall, *a phyſician of good reputation in that country.*] Suſanna's huſband, Dr. John Hall, died in Nov. 1635, and is interred in the chancel of the church of Stratford near his wife. He was buried on the 26th of November, as appears from the Regiſter of burials at Stratford:

"November 26, 1635, Johannes Hall, medicus peritiſſimus."

The following is a tranſcript of his will, extracted from the Regiſtry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"The laſt Will and Teſtament nuncupative of John Hall of Stratford-upon-Avon in the county of Warwick, Gent. made and declared the five and twentieth of November, 1635. *In-*

primis, I give unto my wife my houſe in London. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Naſh my houſe in Acton. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Naſh my meadow. *Item*, I give my goods and money unto my wife and my daughter Naſh, to be equally divided betwixt them. *Item*, concerning my ſtudy of books, I leave them, ſaid he, to you, my ſon Naſh, to diſpoſe of them as you ſee good. As for my manuſcripts, I would have given them to Mr. Boles, if he had been here; but foraſmuch as he is not here preſent, you may, ſon Naſh, burn them, or do with them what you pleaſe. Witneſſes hereunto,

" Thomas Naſh.
" Simon Trapp."

The teſtator not having appointed any executor, adminiſtration was granted to his widow, Nov. 23, 1636.

Some at leaſt of Dr. Hall's manuſcripts eſcaped the flames, one of them being yet extant. See p. 83, n. 1.

I could not, after a very careful ſearch, find the will of Suſanna Hall in the Prerogative-office, nor is it preſerved in the Archives of the dioceſe of Worceſter, the Regiſtrar of which dioceſe at my requeſt very obligingly examined the indexes of all the wills proved in his office between the years 1649 and 1670; but in vain. The town of Stratford-upon-Avon is in that dioceſe.

The inſcriptions on the tomb-ſtones of our poet's favourite daughter and her huſband are as follows:

" Here lyeth the body of John Hall, Gent. he marr. Suſanna, ye daughter and co-heire of Will. Shakſpeare, Gent. he deceaſed Nov. 25, A°. 1635, aged 60."

" Hallius hic ſitus eſt, medica celeberrimus arte,
" Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei.
" Dignus erat meritis qui Neſtora vinceret annis;
" In terris omnes ſed rapit æqua dies.
" Ne tumulo quid deſit, adeſt fidiſſima conjux,
" Et vitæ comitem nunc quoque mortis habet."

Theſe verſes ſhould ſeem, from the laſt two lines, not to have been inſcribed on Dr. Hall's tomb-ſtone till 1649. Perhaps indeed the laſt diſtich only was then added.

" Here lyeth the body of Suſanna, wife to John Hall, Gent. ye daughter of William Shakſpeare, Gent. She deceaſed the 11th of July, A°. 1649, aged 66."

" Witty above her ſexe, but that's not all,
" Wiſe to ſalvation was good Miſtriſs Hall.
" Something of Shakſpeare was in that, but this
" Wholy of him with whom ſhe's now in bliſſe.

a daughter, who was married firſt to Thomas Naſhe,[8]

" Then, paſſenger, haſt ne're a teare,
" To weepe with her that wept with all:
" That wept, yet ſet her ſelfe to chere
" Them up with comforts cordiall.

" Her love ſhall live, her mercy ſpread,
" When thou haſt ne're a teare to ſhed."

The foregoing Engliſh verſes, which are preſerved by Dugdale, are not now remaining, half of the tomb-ſtone having been cut away, and another half ſtone joined to it; with the following inſcription on it—" Here lyeth the body of Richard Watts of Ryhon-Clifford, in the pariſh of old Stratford, Gent. who departed this life the 23d of May, Anno Dom. 1707, and in the 46th year of his age." This Mr. Watts, as I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, was owner of, and lived at the eſtate of Ryhon-Clifford, which was once the property of Dr. Hall.

Mrs. Hall was buried on the 16th of July, 1649, as appears from the Regiſter of Stratford. MALONE.

[8] *She left one child only, a daughter, who was married firſt to Thomas Naſhe, Eſq.*] Elizabeth, our poet's grand-daughter, who appears to have been a favourite, Shakſpeare having left her by his will a memorial of his affection, though ſhe at that time was but eight years old, was born in February 1607-8, as appears by an entry in the Regiſter of Stratford, which Mr. Weſt omitted in the tranſcript with which he furniſhed Mr. Steevens. I learn from the ſame Regiſter that ſhe was married in 1626: " MARRIAGES. April 22, 1626, Mr. Thomas Naſh to Miſtriſs Elizabeth Hall." It ſhould be remembered that every unmarried lady was called *Miſtreſs* till the time of George I. Hence our author's *Miſtreſs* Anne Page. Nor in ſpeaking of an unmarried lady could her chriſtian name be omitted, as it often is at preſent; for then no diſtinction would have remained between her and her mother. Some married ladies indeed were diſtinguiſhed from their daughters by the title of *Madam*.

Mr. Naſh died in 1647, as appears by the inſcription on his tomb-ſtone in the chancel of the church of Stratford:

" Here reſteth ye body of Thomas Naſhe, Eſq. He mar. Elizabeth the daugh. and heire of John Hall, Gent. He died April 4th, A°. 1647, aged 53."

Eſq. and afterwards to Sir John Barnard of Abington,[9] but died likewiſe without iſſue.[1]

" Fata *manent* omnes; hunc *non virtute carentem*,
" Ut neque divitiis, abſtulit atra dies.
" Abſtulit, *at referet* lux ultima. Siſte, viator;
" Si peritura paras, per male parta peris."

The letters printed in Italicks are now obliterated.

By his laſt will, which is in the Prerogative-Office, dated Auguſt 26, 1642, he bequeathed to his well beloved wife, Elizabeth Naſh, and her aſſigns, for her life, (in lieu of jointure and thirds,) one meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, ſituate in the Chapel Street in Stratford, then in the tenure and occupation of Joan Norman, widow; one meadow, known by the name of the Square Meadow, with the appurtenances, in the pariſh of old Stratford, lying near unto the great ſtone-bridge of Stratford; one other meadow with the appurtenances, known by the name of the Waſh Meadow; one little meadow with the appurtenances, adjoining to the ſaid Waſh Meadow; and alſo all the tythes of the manor or lordſhip of Shottery. He deviſes to his kinſman Edward Naſh, the ſon of his uncle George Naſh of London, his heirs and aſſigns, (*inter alia*) the meſſuage or tenement, then in his own occupation, called *The New-Place*, ſituate in the Chapel Street, in Stratford; together with all and ſingular houſes, outhouſes, barns, ſtables, orchards, gardens, eaſements, profits, or commodities, to the ſame belonging; and alſo four-yard land of arable land, meadow, and paſture, with the appurtenances, lying and being in the common fields of Old Stratford, with all the eaſements, profits, commons, commodities, and hereditaments, of the ſame four-yard lands belonging; then in the tenure, uſe, and occupation of him the ſaid Thomas Naſh; and one other meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, ſituate in the pariſh of ——, in London, and called or known by the name of *The Wardrobe*, and then in the tenure, uſe, and occupation of —— Dickes. And from and after the death of his ſaid wife, he bequeaths the meadows above named, and deviſed to her for life, to his ſaid couſin Edward Naſh, his heirs and aſſigns for ever. After various other bequeſts, he directs that one hundred pounds, at the leaſt, be laid out in mourning gowns, cloaks, and apparel, to be diſtributed among his kindred and friends, in ſuch manner as his executrix ſhall think fit. He appoints his wife Elizabeth Naſh his reſiduary legatee, and ſole executrix, and ordains Edmund Rawlins, Wil-

This is what I could learn of any note, either

liam Smith, and John Eaſton, overſeers of his will, to which the witneſſes are John Such, Michael Jonſon, and Samuel Rawlins.

By a nuncupative codicil dated on the day of his death, April 4th, 1647, he bequeaths (*inter alia*) "to his mother Mrs. Hall fifty pounds; to Elizabeth Hathaway fifty pounds; to Thomas Hathaway fifty pounds; to Judith Hathaway ten pounds; to his uncle Naſh and his aunt, his couſin Sadler and his wife, his couſin Richard Quiney and his wife, his couſin Thomas Quiney and his wife, twenty ſhillings each, to buy them rings." The meadows which by his will he had deviſed to his wife for life, he by this codicil deviſes to her, her heirs and aſſigns, for ever, to the end that they may not be ſevered from her own land; and he "appoints and declares that the inheritance of his land given to his couſin Edward Naſh ſhould be by him ſettled after his deceaſe, upon his ſon Thomas Naſh, and his heirs, and for want of ſuch heirs then to remain and deſcend to his own right heirs."

It is obſervable that in this will the teſtator makes no mention of any child, and there is no entry of any iſſue of his marriage in the Regiſter of Stratford; I have no doubt, therefore, that he died without iſſue, and that a pedigree with which Mr. Whalley furniſhed Mr. Steevens a few years ago, is inaccurate. The origin of the miſtake in that pedigree will be pointed out in its proper place.

As by Shakſpeare's will his daughter Suſanna had an eſtate for life in *The New Place*, &c. and his grand-daughter Elizabeth an eſtate tail in remainder, they probably on the marriage of Elizabeth to Mr. Naſh, by a fine and recovery cut off the entail; and by a deed to lead the uſes gave him the entire dominion over that eſtate; which he appears to have miſuſed by deviſing it from Shakſpeare's family to his own.

Mr. Naſh's will and codicil were proved June 5, 1647, and adminiſtration was then granted to his widow. MALONE.

[9] —— *Sir John Barnard of Abington,*] Sir John Barnard of Abington, a ſmall village about a mile from the town of Northampton, was created a Knight by King Charles II. Nov. 25, 1661. In 1671 he ſold the manor and advowſon of the church of Abington, which his anceſtors had poſſeſſed for more than two hundred years, to William Thurſby, Eſq. Sir John Barnard was the eldeſt ſon of Baldwin Barnard, Eſq. by Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of John Fulwood of Ford Hall in the county of

relating to himſelf or family; the character of the man is beſt ſeen in his writings. But ſince Ben

Warwick, Eſq. and was born in 1605. He firſt married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Clement Edmonds of Preſton, in Northamptonſhire, by whom he had four ſons and four daughters. She dying in 1642, he married ſecondly our poet's grand-daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Naſh, on the 5th of June 1649, at Billeſley in Warwickſhire, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. If any of Shakſpeare's manuſcripts remained in his grand-daughter's cuſtody at the time of her ſecond marriage, (and ſome *letters* at leaſt ſhe ſurely muſt have had,) they probably were then removed to the houſe of her new huſband at Abington. Sir Hugh Clopton, who was born two years after her death, mentioned to Mr. Macklin, in the year 1742, an old tradition that ſhe had carried away with her from Stratford many of her grandfather's papers. On the death of Sir John Barnard they muſt have fallen into the hands of Mr. Edward Bagley, Lady Barnard's executor; and if any deſcendant of that gentleman be now living, in his cuſtody they probably remain. MALONE.

[1] ——*but died likewiſe without iſſue.*] Conſiding in a pedigree tranſmitted by Mr. Whalley ſome years ago to Mr. Steevens, I once ſuppoſed that Mr. Rowe was inaccurate in ſaying that our poet's grand-daughter died without iſſue. But he was certainly right; and this lady was undoubtedly the laſt lineal deſcendant of Shakſpeare. There is no entry, as I have already obſerved, in the Regiſter of Stratford, of any iſſue of hers by Mr. Naſh; nor does he in his will mention any child, deviſing the greater part of his property between his wife and his kinſman, Edward Naſh. That Lady Barnard had no iſſue by her ſecond huſband, is proved by the Regiſter of Abington, in which there is no entry of the baptiſm of any child of that marriage, though there are regular entries of the time when the ſeveral children of Sir John Barnard by his firſt wife were baptized. Lady Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on the 17th of February 1669-70; but her huſband did not ſhow his reſpect for her memory by a monument, or even an inſcription of any kind. He ſeems not to have been ſenſible of the honourable alliance he had made. Shakſpeare's grand-daughter would not, at this day, go to her grave without a memorial. By her laſt will, which I ſubjoin, ſhe directs her truſtee to ſell her eſtate of *New-Place*, &c. to the beſt bidder, and to offer it firſt to her couſin Mr. Edward Naſh. How ſhe *then* came to have any property in New-Place, which her firſt huſband had deviſed to this very Edward Naſh,

Jonſon has made a ſort of an eſſay towards it in his *Diſcoveries*, I will give it in his words:

does not appear; but I ſuppoſe that after the death of Mr. Thomas Naſh ſhe exchanged the patrimonial lands which he bequeathed to her, with Edward Naſh and his ſon, and took New-Place, &c. inſtead of them.

Sir John Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on March 5th, 1673-4. On his tomb-ſtone, in the chancel of the church is the following inſcription:

Hic jacent exuviæ generoſiſſimi viri Johannis Bernard, *militis; patre, avo, abavo, tritavo, aliiſque progenitoribus per ducentos et amplius annos hujus oppidi de Abingdon dominis, inſignis: qui fato ceſſit undeſeptuageſſimo ætatis ſuæ anno, quinto nonas Martii, annoque a partu B. Virginis,* MDCLXXIII.

Sir John Barnard having made no will, adminiſtration of his effects was granted on the 7th of November 1674, to Henry Gilbert of Locko in the county of Derby, who had married his daughter Elizabeth by his firſt wife, and to his two other ſurviving daughters; Mary Higgs, widow of Thomas Higgs of Coleſborne, Eſq. and Eleanor Cotton, the wife of Samuel Cotton, Eſq. All Sir John Barnard's other children except the three above mentioned died without iſſue. I know not whether any deſcendant of theſe be now living: but if that ſhould be the caſe, among their papers may poſſibly be found ſome fragment or other relative to Shakſpeare; for by his grand-daughter's order, the adminiſtrators of her huſband were entitled to keep poſſeſſion of her houſe, &c. in Stratford, for ſix months after his death.

The following is a copy of the will of this laſt deſcendant of our poet, extracted from the Regiſtry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"In the Name of God, Amen. I Dame Elizabeth Barnard, wife of Sir John Barnard of Abington in the county of Northampton, knight, being in perfect memory, (bleſſed be God!) and mindful of mortality, do make this my laſt will and teſtament in manner and form following:

"Whereas by my certain deed or writing under my hand and ſeal, dated on or about the eighteenth day of April, 1653, according to a power therein mentioned, I the ſaid Elizabeth have limited and diſpoſed of all that my meſſuage with the appurtenances in Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, called the New-Place, and all that four-yard land and an half in Stratford-Welcombe and Biſhopton in the county of Warwick, (after the deceaſe of the ſaid Sir John Barnard, and me the ſaid Eliza-

" I remember the players have often mentioned " it as an honour to Shakſpeare, that in writing

beth,) unto Henry Smith of Stratford aforeſaid, Gent. and Job Dighton of the Middle Temple, London, Eſq. ſince deceaſed, and their heirs; upon truſt that they, and the ſurvivor, and the heirs of ſuch ſurvivor, ſhould bargain and ſell the ſame for the beſt value they can get, and the money thereby to be raiſed to be employed and diſpoſed of to ſuch perſon and perſons, and in ſuch manner as I the ſaid Elizabeth ſhould by any writing or note under my hand, truly teſtified, declare and nominate; as thereby may more fully appear. Now my will is, and I do hereby ſignify and declare my mind and meaning to be, that the ſaid Henry Smith, my ſurviving truſtee, or his heirs, ſhall with all convenient ſpeed after the deceaſe of the ſaid Sir John Barnard my huſband, make ſale of the inheritance of all and ſingular the premiſes, and that my loving couſin Edward Naſh, Eſq. ſhall have the firſt offer or refuſal thereof, according to my promiſe formerly made to him: and the monies to be raiſed by ſuch ſale I do give, diſpoſe of, and appoint the ſame to be paid and diſtributed, as is herein after expreſſed; that is to ſay, to my couſin Thomas Welles of Carleton, in the county of Bedford, Gent. the ſum of fifty pounds, to be paid him within one year next after ſuch ſale: and if the ſaid Thomas Wells ſhall happen to die before ſuch time as his ſaid legacy ſhall become due to him, then my deſire is, that my kinſman Edward Bagley, citizen of London, ſhall have the ſole benefit thereof.

" *Item*, I do give and appoint unto Judith Hathaway, one of the daughters of my kinſman Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford aforeſaid, the annual ſum of five pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto her yearly and every year, from and after the deceaſe of the ſaid ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, for and during the natural life of her the ſaid Judith, at the two moſt uſual feaſts or days of payment in the year, *videlicet*, the feaſt of the Annunciation of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, and Saint Michael, the archangel, by equal portions, the firſt payment thereof to begin at ſuch of the ſaid feaſts as ſhall next happen, after the deceaſe of the ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, if the ſaid premiſes can be ſo ſoon ſold; or otherwiſe ſo ſoon as the ſame can be ſold: and if the ſaid Judith ſhall happen to marry, and ſhall be minded to releaſe the ſaid annual ſum of five pounds, and ſhall accordingly releaſe and quit all her intereſt and right in and to the ſame after it ſhall become due to her, then and in ſuch caſe, I do give and appoint to her the ſum of forty pounds in lieu

" (whatſoever he penned) he never blotted out a

thereof, to be paid unto her at the time of the executing of ſuch releaſe as aforeſaid.

" *Item*, I give and appoint unto Joan the wife of Edward Kent, and one other of the daughters of the ſaid Thomas Hathaway, the ſum of fifty pounds, to be likewiſe paid unto her within one year next after the deceaſe of the ſurvivor of the ſaid Sir John Barnard and me the ſaid Elizabeth, if the ſaid premiſes can be ſoon ſold, or otherwiſe ſo ſoon as the ſame can be ſold; and if the ſaid Joan ſhall happen to die before the ſaid fifty pounds ſhall be paid to her, then I do give and appoint the ſame unto Edward Kent the younger, her ſon, to be paid unto him when he ſhall attain the age of one-and-twenty years.

" *Item*, I do alſo give and appoint unto him the ſaid Edward Kent, ſon of the ſaid John, the ſum of thirty pounds, towards putting him out as an apprentice, and to be paid and diſpoſed of to that uſe when he ſhall be fit for it.

" *Item*, I do give or appoint and diſpoſe of unto Roſe, Elizabeth, and Suſanna, three other of the daughters of my ſaid kinſman Thomas Hathaway, the ſum of forty pounds a-piece, to be paid unto every of them at ſuch time and in ſuch manner as the ſaid fifty pounds before appointed to the ſaid Joan Kent, their ſiſter, ſhall become payable.

" *Item*, All the reſt of the monies that ſhall be raiſed by ſuch ſale as aforeſaid, I give and diſpoſe of unto my ſaid kinſman Edward Bagley, except five pounds only, which I give and appoint to my ſaid truſtee Henry Smith for his pains; and if the ſaid Edward Naſh ſhall refuſe the purchaſe of the ſaid meſſuage and four-yard land and a half with the appurtenances, then my will and deſire is, that the ſaid Henry Smith or his heirs ſhall ſell the inheritance of the ſaid premiſes and every part thereof unto the ſaid Edward Bagley, and that he ſhall purchaſe the ſame; upon this condition, nevertheleſs, that he the ſaid Edward Bagley, his heirs, executors, or adminiſtrators, ſhall juſtly and faithfully perform my will and true meaning, in making due payment of all the ſeveral ſums of money or legacies before mentioned, in ſuch manner as aforeſaid. And I do hereby declare my will and meaning to be that the executors or adminiſtrators of my ſaid huſband Sir John Barnard ſhall have and enjoy the uſe and benefit of my ſaid houſe in Stratford, called the New-Place, with the orchards, gardens, and all other the appurtenances thereto belonging, for and during the ſpace of ſix months next after the deceaſe of him the ſaid Sir John Barnard.

" *Item*, I give and deviſe unto my kinſman, Thomas Hart, the

" line.[z] My anſwer hath been, *Would he had blotted*

ſon of Thomas Hart, late of Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, all that my other meſſuage or inn ſituate in Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, commonly called the Maidenhead, with the appurtenances, and the next houſe thereunto adjoining, with the barn belonging to the ſame, now or late in the occupation of Michael Johnſon or his aſſigns, with all and ſingular the appurtenances; to hold to him the ſaid Thomas Hart the ſon, and the heirs of his body; and for default of ſuch iſſue, I give and deviſe the ſame to George Hart, brother of the ſaid Thomas Hart, and to the heirs of his body; and for default of ſuch iſſue to the right heirs of me the ſaid Elizabeth Barnard for ever.

" *Item*, I do make, ordain, and appoint my ſaid loving kinſman Edward Bagley ſole executor of this my laſt will and teſtament, hereby revoking all former wills; deſiring him to ſee a juſt performance hereof, according to my true intent and meaning. In witneſs whereof I the ſaid Elizabeth Barnard have hereunto ſet my hand and ſeal, the nine-and-twentieth day of January, Anno Domini, one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-nine.

" ELIZABETH BARNARD.

" *Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, and declared to be the laſt will and teſtament of the ſaid* Elizabeth Barnard, *in the preſence of*

" John Howes, Rector de Abington.

" Francis Wickes.

" *Probatum fuit teſtamentum ſupraſcriptum apud ædes Exonienſes ſituat. in le Strand, in comitatu Middx. quarto die menſis Martij*, 1669, *coram venerabili viro Domino Egidio Sweete, milite et legum doctore, ſurrogato, &c. juramento* Edwardi Bagley, *unici executor. nominat. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat.*"

MALONE.

[z] ——*that in writing (whatſoever he penned) he never blotted out a line.*] This is not true. They only ſay in their preface to his plays, that " his mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that eaſineſs, that we have *ſcarce* received from him a blot in his papers." On this Mr. Pope obſerves, that " there never was a more groundleſs *report*, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he entirely new writ; *The Hiſtory of Henry the Sixth*, which was firſt publiſhed under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaſter*; and that of *Henry V.* extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almoſt as much again as at firſt, and many others."

"*a thouſand!* which they thought a malevolent "ſpeech. I had not told poſterity this, but for

Surely this is a very ſtrange kind of argument. In the firſt place this was not a *report*, (unleſs by that word we are to underſtand *relation*,) but a poſitive aſſertion, grounded on the beſt evidence that the nature of the ſubject admitted; namely, ocular proof. The players ſay, in ſubſtance, that Shakſpeare had ſuch a happineſs of expreſſion, that, as they collect from his papers, he had *ſeldom* occaſion to alter the firſt words he had ſet down; in conſequence of which they found *ſcarce* a blot in his writings. And how is this refuted by Mr. Pope? By telling us, that a great many of his plays were *enlarged* by their author. Allowing this to be true, which is by no means certain, if he had written twenty plays, each conſiſting of one thouſand lines, and afterwards added to each of them a thouſand more, would it therefore follow, that he had not writen the firſt thouſand with facility and correctneſs, or that thoſe muſt have been neceſſarily *expunged*, becauſe new matter was added to them? Certainly not.—But the truth is, it is by no means clear that our author did enlarge all the plays mentioned by Mr. Pope, if even that would prove the point intended to be eſtabliſhed. Mr. Pope was evidently deceived by the quarto copies. From the play of *Henry V.* being more perfect in the folio edition than in the quarto, nothing follows but that the quarto impreſſion of that piece was printed from a mutilated and imperfect copy, ſtolen from the theatre, or taken down by ear during the repreſentation. What have been called the *quarto* copies of the Second and Third Parts of *King Henry VI.* were in fact two old plays written before the time of Shakſpeare, and entitled *The Firſt Part of the Contention of the two Houſes of Yorke and Lancaſter*, &c. and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. on which he conſtructed two new plays; juſt as on the old plays of *King John*, and *The Taming of a Shrew*, he formed two other plays with nearly the ſame titles. See *The Diſſertation in* Vol. XIV. p. 223.

The tragedy of *Hamlet* in the firſt edition, (*now extant*,) that of 1604, is ſaid to be "enlarged to almoſt as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy." What is to be collected from this, but that there was a former *imperfect* edition (I believe, in the year 1602)? that the one we are now ſpeaking of was enlarged to as much again as it was *in the former mutilated impreſſion*, and that this is the genuine and perfect copy, the other imperfect and ſpurious?

" their ignorance, who choſe that circumſtance to
" commend their friend by, wherein he moſt fault-
" ed: and to juſtify mine own candour, for I loved
" the man, and do honour his memory, on this ſide
" idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, ho-
" neſt, and of an open and free nature, had an
" excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expreſ-
" ſions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that
" ſometimes it was neceſſary he ſhould be ſtopped:
" *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Auguſtus ſaid of Haterius.
" His wit was in his own power; would the rule of
" it had been ſo too. Many times he fell into
" thoſe things which could not eſcape laughter; as
" when he ſaid in the perſon of Cæſar, one ſpeak-
" ing to him,

' Cæſar, thou doſt me wrong.'

" He replied:

' Cæſar did never wrong, but with juſt cauſe.'

" and ſuch like, which were ridiculous. But he

The Merry Wives of Windſor, indeed, and *Romeo and Juliet*, and perhaps *Love's Labour's Loſt*, our author appears to have altered and amplified; and to *King Richard II.* what is called the parliament-ſcene, ſeems to have been added; (though this laſt is by no means certain;) but neither will theſe augmentations and new-modellings diſprove what has been aſſerted by Shakſpeare's fellow-comedians concerning the facility of his writing, and the exquiſite felicity of his firſt expreſſions.

The haſty ſketch of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he is ſaid to have compoſed in a fortnight, he might have written without a blot; and three or four years afterwards, when he choſe to dilate his plan, he might have compoſed the additional ſcenes without a blot likewiſe. In a word, ſuppoſing even that Nature had not endowed him with that rich vein which he unqueſtionably poſſeſſed, he who in little more than twenty years produces thirty-four or thirty-five pieces for the ſtage, has certainly not much time for expunging. MALONE.

" redeemed his vices with his virtues; there was " ever more in him to be praiſed than to be par- " doned."

As for the paſſage which he mentions out of Shakſpeare, there is ſomewhat like it in *Julius Cæſar*, but without the abſurdity; nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have ſeen as quoted by Mr. Jonſon.[3]

Beſides his plays in this edition, there are two or three aſcribed to him by Mr. Langbaine,[4] which

[3] —— *nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have ſeen, as quoted by Mr. Jonſon.*] See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note on *Julius Cæſar*, Act III. ſc. i. Vol. XVI. MALONE.

[4] *Beſides his plays in this edition, there are two or three aſcribed to him by Mr. Langbaine,*] *The Birth of Merlin*, 1662, written by W. Rowley; the old play of *King John*, in two parts, 1591, on which Shakſpeare formed his *King John*; and *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, written by George Peele.

The editor of the folio 1664, ſubjoined to the 36 dramas publiſhed in 1623, ſeven plays, four of which had appeared in Shakſpeare's life-time with his name in the title-page, viz. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609, *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, 1600, *The London Prodigal*, 1605, and *The Yorkſhire Tragedy*, 1608; the three others which they inſerted, *Locrine*, 1595, *Lord Cromwell*, 1602, and *The Puritan*, 1607, having been printed with the initials W. S. in the title-page, the editor choſe to interpret thoſe letters to mean William Shakſpeare, and aſcribed them alſo to our poet. I publiſhed an edition of theſe ſeven pieces ſome years ago, freed in ſome meaſure from the groſs errors with which they had been exhibited in ancient copies, that the publick might ſee what they contained; and do not heſitate to declare my firm perſuaſion that of *Locrine, Lord Cromwell, Sir John Oldcaſtle, The London Prodigal*, and *The Puritan*, Shakſpeare did not write a ſingle line.

How little the bookſellers of former times ſcrupled to affix the names of celebrated writers to the productions of others, even in the life-time of ſuch celebrated authors, may be collected from Heywood's tranſlations from Ovid, which in 1612, while Shakſpeare was yet living, were aſcribed to him. See Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1.* With the dead they would certainly

* Mr. Malone's edition of our author's works, 1790.

I have never ſeen, and know nothing of. He writ likewiſe *Venus and Adonis*, and *Tarquin and Lucrece*, in ſtanzas, which have been printed in a late collection of poems.[5] As to the character given of him by Ben Jonſon, there is a good deal true in it: but I believe it may be as well expreſſed by what Horace ſays of the firſt Romans, who wrote tragedy upon the Greek models, (or indeed tranſlated them,) in his epiſtle to Auguſtus:

" —— naturâ ſublimis & acer:
" Nam ſpirat tragicum ſatis, et feliciter audet,
" Sed turpem putat in chartis metuitque lituram."

As I have not propoſed to myſelf to enter into a large and complete criticiſm upon Shakſpeare's works, ſo I will only take the liberty; with all due ſubmiſſion to the judgment of others, to obſerve ſome of thoſe things I have been pleaſed with in looking him over.

His plays are properly to be diſtinguiſhed only into comedies and tragedies. Thoſe which are called hiſtories, and even ſome of his comedies, are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of come-

make ſtill more free. " This book (ſays Anthony Wood, ſpeaking of a work to which the name of Sir Philip Sydney was prefixed) *coming out ſo late*, it is to be inquired whether Sir Philip Sydney's name is not ſet to it for ſale-ſake, being a uſual thing in theſe days to ſet a great name to a book or books, by ſharking bookſellers, or ſnivelling writers, to get bread." *Athen. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 208. MALONE.

[5] —— *in a late collection of poems.*] In the fourth volume of *State Poems*, printed in 1707. Mr. Rowe did not go beyond *A Late Collection of Poems*, and does not ſeem to have known that Shakſpeare alſo wrote 154 Sonnets, and a poem entitled *A Lover's Complaint*. MALONE.

dy amongſt them.[6] That way of tragi-comedy was the common miſtake of that age, and is indeed be-

[6] —— *are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongst them.*] Heywood, our author's contemporary, has ſtated the beſt defence that can be made for his intermixing lighter with the more ſerious ſcenes of his dramas:

"It may likewiſe be objected, why amongſt ſad and grave hiſtories I have here and there inſerted fabulous jeſts and tales ſavouring of lightneſs. I anſwer, I have therein imitated our *hiſtorical, and comical poets*, that write to the ſtage, who, leſt the auditory ſhould be dulled with ſerious courſes, which are merely weighty and material, in every act preſent ſome Zany, with his mimick action to breed in the leſs capable mirth and laughter; *for they that write to all, muſt ſtrive to pleaſe all.* And as ſuch faſhion themſelves to a multitude diverſely addicted, ſo I to an univerſality of readers diverſely diſpoſed." Pref. to *Hiſtory of Women*, 1624. MALONE.

The criticks who renounce tragi-comedy as barbarous, I fear, ſpeak more from notions which they have formed in their cloſets, than any well-built theory deduced from experience of what pleaſes or diſpleaſes, which ought to be the foundation of all rules.

Even ſuppoſing there is no affectation in this refinement, and that thoſe criticks have really tried and purified their minds till there is no droſs remaining, ſtill this can never be the caſe of a popular audience, to which a dramatick repreſentation is referred.

Dryden in one of his prefaces condemns his own conduct in *The Spaniſh Friar*; but, ſays he, I did not write it to pleaſe myſelf, it was given to the publick. Here is an involuntary confeſſion that tragi-comedy is more pleaſing to the audience; I would aſk then, upon what ground it is condemned?

This ideal excellence of uniformity reſts upon a ſuppoſition that we are either more refined, or a higher order of beings than we really are: there is no proviſion made for what may be called the animal part of our minds.

Though we ſhould acknowledge this paſſion for variety and contrarieties to be the vice of our nature, it is ſtill a propenſity which we all feel, and which he who undertakes to divert us muſt find proviſion for.

We are obliged, it is true, in our purſuit after ſcience, or excellence in any art, to keep our minds ſteadily fixed for a long continuance; it is a taſk we impoſe on ourſelves: but I do not wiſh to taſk myſelf in my amuſements.

If the great object of the theatre is amuſement, a dramatick

come ſo agreeable to the Engliſh taſte, that though the ſeverer criticks among us cannot bear it, yet the generality of our audiences ſeem to be better pleaſed with it than with an exact tragedy. *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of a Shrew*, are all pure comedy; the reſt, however they are called, have ſomething of both kinds. It is not very eaſy to determine which way of writing he was moſt excellent in. There is certainly a great deal of entertainment in his comical humours; and though they did not then ſtrike at all ranks of people, as the ſatire of the preſent age has taken the liberty to do, yet there is a pleaſing and a well-diſtinguiſhed variety in thoſe characters which he thought fit to meddle with. Falſtaff is allowed by every body to be a maſterpiece; the character is always well ſuſtained, though drawn out into the length of three plays; and even the account of his death given by his old landlady Mrs. Quickly, in the firſt Act of *Henry the Fifth*, though it be extremely natural, is yet as diverting as any part of his life. If there be any fault in the draught he has made of this lewd old fellow, it is, that though he has made him a thief, lying, cowardly, vain-glorious, and in ſhort every way vicious, yet he has given him ſo much wit as to make him almoſt too agreeable; and I do not know whether

work muſt poſſeſs every means to produce that effect; if it gives inſtruction by the by, ſo much its merit is the greater; but that is not its principal object. The ground on which it ſtands, and which gives it a claim to the protection and encouragement of civiliſed ſociety, is not becauſe it enforces moral precepts, or gives inſtruction of any kind; but from the general advantage that it produces, by habituating the mind to find its amuſement in intellectual pleaſures; weaning it from ſenſuality, and by degrees filing off, ſmoothing, and poliſhing, its rugged corners.

Sir J. Reynolds.

ſome people have not, in remembrance of the diverſion he had formerly afforded them, been ſorry to ſee his friend Hal uſe him ſo ſcurvily, when he comes to the crown in the end of *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth.* Amongſt other extravagancies, in *The Merry Wives of Windſor* he has made him a deer-ſtealer, that he might at the ſame time remember his Warwickſhire proſecutor, under the name of Juſtice Shallow; he has given him very near the ſame coat of arms which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, deſcribes for a family there,[7] and makes the Welſh parſon deſcant very pleaſantly upon them. That whole play is admirable; the humours are various and well oppoſed; the main deſign, which is to cure Ford of his unreaſonable jealouſy, is extremely well conducted. In *Twelfth-Night* there is ſomething ſingularly ridiculous and pleaſant in the fantaſtical ſteward Malvolio. The paraſite and the vain-glorious in Parolles, in *All's well that ends well,* is as good as any thing of that kind in Plautus or Terence. Petruchio, in *The Taming of the Shrew,* is an uncommon piece of humour. The converſation of Benedick and Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing,* and of Roſalind, in *As you like it,* have much wit and ſprightlineſs all along. His clowns, without which character there was hardly any play writ in that time, are all very entertaining: and, I believe,

[7] —— *the ſame coat of arms which* Dugdale, *in his Antiquities of that county, deſcribes for a family there,*] There are two coats. I obſerve, in Dugdale, where three ſilver fiſhes are borne in the name of *Lucy*; and another coat to the monument of Thomas Lucy, ſon of Sir William Lucy, in which are quartered in four ſeveral diviſions, twelve little *fiſhes*, three in each diviſion, probably *luces*. This very coat, indeed, ſeems alluded to in Shallow's giving the *dozen* white *luces*; and in Slender's ſaying *he may quarter*. THEOBALD.

Therſites in *Troilus and Creſsida*, and Apemantus in *Timon*, will be allowed to be maſter-pieces of ill-nature, and ſatirical ſnarling. To theſe I might add, that incomparable character of Shylock the Jew, in *The Merchant of Venice*; but though we have ſeen that play received and acted as a comedy,[8] and the part of the Jew performed by an excellent comedian, yet I cannot but think it was deſigned tragically by the author. There appears in it ſuch a deadly ſpirit of revenge, ſuch a ſavage fierceneſs and fellneſs, and ſuch a bloody deſignation of cruelty and miſchief, as cannot agree either with the ſtyle or characters of comedy. The play itſelf, take it altogether, ſeems to me to be one of the moſt finiſhed of any of Shakſpeare's. The tale, indeed, in that part relating to the caſkets, and the extravagant and unuſual kind of bond given by Antonio, is too much removed from the rules of probability; but taking the fact for granted, we muſt allow it to be very beautifully written. There is ſomething in the friendſhip of Antonio to Baſſanio very great, generous, and tender. The whole fourth Act (ſuppoſing, as I ſaid, the fact to be probable,) is extremely fine. But there are two paſſages that deſerve a particular notice. The firſt is, what Portia ſays in praiſe of mercy, and the other on the

[8] —— *but though we have ſeen that play received and acted as a comedy,*] In 1701 Lord Lanſdown produced his alteration of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, under the title of *The Jew of Venice*, and expreſsly calls it a *comedy*. Shylock was performed by Mr. Dogget. REED.

And ſuch was the bad taſte of our anceſtors that this piece continued to be a ſtock-play from 1701 to Feb. 14, 1741, when *The Merchant of Venice* was exhibited *for the firſt time* at the theatre in Drury-Lane, and Mr. Macklin made his firſt appearance in the character of Shylock. MALONE.

power of muſick. The melancholy of Jaques, in *As you like it*, is as ſingular and odd as it is diverting. And if, what Horace ſays,

" Difficile eſt proprie communia dicere,"

it will be a hard taſk for any one to go beyond him in the deſcription of the ſeveral degrees and ages of man's life, though the thought be old, and common enough.

" ——All the world's a ſtage,
" And all the men and women merely players;
" They have their exits and their entrances,
" And one man in his time plays many parts,
" His acts being ſeven ages. At firſt, the infant,
" Mewling and puking in the nurſe's arms:
" And then, the whining ſchool-boy with his ſatchel,
" And ſhining morning face, creeping like ſnail
" Unwillingly to ſchool. And then, the lover
" Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
" Made to his miſtreſs' eye-brow. Then, a ſoldier;
" Full of ſtrange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
" Jealous in honour, ſudden and quick in quarrel,
" Seeking the bubble reputation
" Ev'n in the cannon's mouth. And then, the juſtice;
" In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
" With eyes ſevere, and beard of formal cut,
" Full of wiſe ſaws and modern inſtances;
" And ſo he plays his part. The ſixth age ſhifts
" Into the lean and ſlipper'd pantaloon;
" With ſpectacles on noſe, and pouch on ſide;
" His youthful hoſe, well ſav'd, a world too wide
" For his ſhrunk ſhank; and his big manly voice,
" Turning again tow'rd childiſh treble, pipes
" And whittles in his ſound: Laſt ſcene of all,
" That ends this ſtrange eventful hiſtory,
" Is ſecond childiſhneſs, and mere oblivion;
" Sans teeth, ſans eyes, ſans taſte, ſans every thing."

His images are indeed every where ſo lively, that the thing he would repreſent ſtands full before you, and you poſſeſs every part of it. I will venture to

point out one more, which is, I think, as ſtrong and as uncommon as any thing I ever ſaw; it is an image of Patience. Speaking of a maid in love, he ſays,

> " ——She never told her love,
> " But let concealment, like a worm i'th' bud,
> " Feed on her damaſk cheek: ſhe pin'd in thought,
> " And ſate like *Patience* on a monument,
> " Smiling at *Grief*."

What an image is here given! and what a taſk would it have been for the greateſt maſters of Greece and Rome to have expreſſed the paſſions deſigned by this ſketch of ſtatuary! The ſtyle of his comedy is, in general, natural to the characters, and eaſy in itſelf; and the wit moſt commonly ſprightly and pleaſing, except in thoſe places where he runs into doggrel rhymes, as in *The Comedy of Errors*, and ſome other plays. As for his jingling ſometimes, and playing upon words, it was the common vice of the age he lived in: and if we find it in the pulpit, made uſe of as an ornament to the ſermons of ſome of the graveſt divines of thoſe times, perhaps it may not be thought too light for the ſtage.

But certainly the greatneſs of this author's genius does no where ſo much appear, as where he gives his imagination an entire looſe, and raiſes his fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the viſible world. Such are his attempts in *The Tempeſt*, *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*. Of theſe, *The Tempeſt*, however it comes to be placed the firſt by the publiſhers of his works, can never have been the firſt written by him: it ſeems to me as perfect in its kind, as almoſt any thing we have of his. One may obſerve, that the

unities are kept here, with an exactneſs uncommon to the liberties of his writing; though that was what, I ſuppoſe, he valued himſelf leaſt upon, ſince his excellencies were all of another kind. I am very ſenſible that he does, in this play, depart too much from that likeneſs to truth which ought to be obſerved in theſe ſort of writings; yet he does it ſo very finely, that one is eaſily drawn in to have more faith for his ſake, than reaſon does well allow of. His magick has ſomething in it very ſolemn and very poetical: and that extravagant character of Caliban is mighty well ſuſtained, ſhows a wonderful invention in the author, who could ſtrike out ſuch a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the fineſt and moſt uncommon groteſques that ever was ſeen. The obſervation, which, I have been informed, three very great men concurred in making[9] upon this part, was extremely juſt; that *Shakſpeare had not only found out a new character in his* Caliban, *but had alſo deviſed and adapted a new manner of language for that character.*

It is the ſame magick that raiſes the Fairies in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*, the Witches in *Macbeth*, and the Ghoſt in *Hamlet*, with thoughts and language ſo proper to the parts they ſuſtain, and ſo peculiar to the talent of this writer. But of the two laſt of theſe plays I ſhall have occaſion to take

[9] ——*which, I have been informed, three very great men concurred in making*—] Lord Falkland, Lord C. J. Vaughan, and Mr. Selden. ROWE.

Dryden was of the ſame opinion. "His perſon (ſays he, ſpeaking of Caliban,) is monſtrous, as he is the product of unnatural luſt, and *his language is as hobgoblin as his perſon*: in all things he is diſtinguiſhed from other mortals." Preface to *Troilus and Creſſida*. MALONE.

notice, among the tragedies of Mr. Shakſpeare. If one undertook to examine the greateſt part of theſe by thoſe rules which are eſtabliſhed by Ariſtotle, and taken from the model of the Grecian ſtage, it would be no very hard taſk to find a great many faults; but as Shakſpeare lived under a kind of mere light of nature, and had never been made acquainted with the regularity of thoſe written precepts, ſo it would be hard to judge him by a law he knew nothing of. We are to conſider him as a man that lived in a ſtate of almoſt univerſal licence and ignorance: there was no eſtabliſhed judge, but every one took the liberty to write according to the dictates of his own fancy. When one conſiders, that there is not one play before him of a reputation good enough to entitle it to an appearance on the preſent ſtage, it cannot but be a matter of great wonder that he ſhould advance dramatick poetry ſo far as he did. The fable is what is generally placed the firſt, among thoſe that are reckoned the conſtituent parts of a tragick or heroick poem; not, perhaps, as it is the moſt difficult or beautiful, but as it is the firſt properly to be thought of in the contrivance and courſe of the whole; and with the fable ought to be conſidered the fit diſpoſition, order, and conduct of its ſeveral parts. As it is not in this province of the drama that the ſtrength and maſtery of Shakſpeare lay, ſo I ſhall not undertake the tedious and ill-natured trouble to point out the ſeveral faults he was guilty of in it. His tales were ſeldom invented, but rather taken either from the true hiſtory, or novels and romances: and he commonly made uſe of them in that order, with thoſe incidents, and that extent of time in which he found them in the authors from whence he borrowed them. So *The Winter's Tale*,

which is taken from an old book, called *The Delectable Hiſtory of Doraſtus and Fawnia*, contains the ſpace of ſixteen or ſeventeen years, and the ſcene is ſometimes laid in Bohemia, and ſometimes in Sicily, according to the original order of the ſtory. Almoſt all his hiſtorical plays comprehend a great length of time, and very different and diſtinct places: and in his *Antony and Cleopatra*, the ſcene travels over the greateſt part of the Roman empire. But in recompence for his careleſsneſs in this point, when he comes to another part of the drama, *the manners of his characters, in acting or ſpeaking what is proper for them, and fit to be ſhown by the poet*, he may be generally juſtified, and in very many places greatly commended. For thoſe plays which he has taken from the Engliſh or Roman hiſtory, let any man compare them, and he will find the character as exact in the poet as the hiſtorian. He ſeems indeed ſo far from propoſing to himſelf any one action for a ſubject, that the title very often tells you, it is *The Life of King John, King Richard*, &c. What can be more agreeable to the idea our hiſtorians give of *Henry the Sixth*, than the picture Shakſpeare has drawn of him? His manners are every where exactly the ſame with the ſtory; one finds him ſtill deſcribed with ſimplicity, paſſive ſanctity, want of courage, weakneſs of mind, and eaſy ſubmiſſion to the governance of an imperious wife, or prevailing faction: though at the ſame time the poet does juſtice to his good qualities, and moves the pity of his audience for him, by ſhowing him pious, diſintereſted, a contemner of the things of this world, and wholly reſigned to the ſevereſt diſpenſations of God's providence. There is a ſhort ſcene in *The Second Part of Henry the Sixth*, which I cannot think but admirable in its kind. Cardinal Beaufort,

who had murdered the Duke of Glouceſter, is ſhown in the laſt agonies on his death-bed, with the good king praying over him. There is ſo much terror in one, ſo much tenderneſs and moving piety in the other, as muſt touch any one who is capable either of fear or pity. In his *Henry the Eighth*, that prince is drawn with that greatneſs of mind, and all thoſe good qualities which are attributed to him in any account of his reign. If his faults are not ſhown in an equal degree, and the ſhades in this picture do not bear a juſt proportion to the lights, it is not that the artiſt wanted either colours or ſkill in the diſpoſition of them; but the truth, I believe, might be, that he forbore doing it out of regard to Queen Elizabeth, ſince it could have been no very great reſpect to the memory of his miſtreſs, to have expoſed ſome certain parts of her father's life upon the ſtage. He has dealt much more freely with the miniſter of that great king; and certainly nothing was ever more juſtly written, than the character of Cardinal Wolſey. He has ſhown him inſolent in his proſperity; and yet, by a wonderful addreſs, he makes his fall and ruin the ſubject of general compaſſion. The whole man, with his vices and virtues, is finely and exactly deſcribed in the ſecond ſcene of the fourth Act. The diſtreſſes likewiſe of Queen Katharine, in this play, are very movingly touched; and though the art of the poet has ſcreened King Henry from any groſs imputation of injuſtice, yet one is inclined to wiſh, the Queen had met with a fortune more worthy of her birth and virtue. Nor are the manners, proper to the perſons repreſented, leſs juſtly obſerved, in thoſe characters taken from the Roman hiſtory; and of this, the fierceneſs and impatience of Coriolanus, his courage and diſdain of the common people, the virtue and philoſophical temper of Brutus, and the

irregular greatneſs of mind in M. Antony, are beautiful proofs. For the two laſt eſpecially, you find them exactly as they are deſcribed by Plutarch, from whom certainly Shakſpeare copied them. He has indeed followed his original pretty cloſe, and taken in ſeveral little incidents that might have been ſpared in a play. But, as I hinted before, his deſign ſeems moſt commonly rather to deſcribe thoſe great men in the ſeveral fortunes and accidents of their lives, than to take any ſingle great action, and form his work ſimply upon that. However, there are ſome of his pieces, where the fable is founded upon one action only. Such are more eſpecially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The deſign in *Romeo and Juliet* is plainly the puniſhment of their two families, for the unreaſonable feuds and animoſities that had been ſo long kept up between them, and occaſioned the effuſion of ſo much blood. In the management of this ſtory, he has ſhown ſomething wonderfully tender and paſſionate in the love-part, and very pitiful in the diſtreſs. *Hamlet* is founded on much the ſame tale with the *Electra* of Sophocles. In each of them a young prince is engaged to revenge the death of his father, their mothers are equally guilty, are both concerned in the murder of their huſbands,[1] and are afterwards married to the murderers. There is in the firſt part of the Greek tragedy ſomething very moving in the grief of Electra; but, as Mr. Dacier has obſerved, there is ſomething very unnatural and ſhocking in the manners he has given that princeſs and Oreſtes in the latter part. Oreſtes

[1] ——*are both concerned in the murder of their husbands,*] It does not appear that Hamlet's mother was concerned in the death of her huſband. MALONE.

imbrues his hands in the blood of his own mother; and that barbarous action is performed, though not immediately upon the ſtage, yet ſo near, that the audience hear Clytemneſtra crying out to Ægyſthus for help, and to her ſon for mercy: while Electra her daughter, and a princeſs, (both of them characters that ought to have appeared with more decency,) ſtands upon the ſtage, and encourages her brother in the parricide. What horror does this not raiſe! Clytemneſtra was a wicked woman, and had deſerved to die; nay, in the truth of the ſtory, ſhe was killed by her own ſon; but to repreſent an action of this kind on the ſtage, is certainly an offence againſt thoſe rules of manners proper to the perſons, that ought to be obſerved there. On the contrary, let us only look a little on the conduct of Shakſpeare. Hamlet is repreſented with the ſame piety towards his father, and reſolution to revenge his death, as Oreſtes; he has the ſame abhorrence for his mother's guilt, which, to provoke him the more, is heightened by inceſt: but it is with wonderful art and juſtneſs of judgment, that the poet reſtrains him from doing violence to his mother. To prevent any thing of that kind, he makes his father's Ghoſt forbid that part of his vengeance:

> "But howſoever thou purſu'ſt this act,
> "Taint not thy mind, nor let thy ſoul contrive
> "Againſt thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
> "And to thoſe thorns that in her boſom lodge,
> "To prick and ſting her."

This is to diſtinguiſh rightly between *horror* and *terror*. The latter is a proper paſſion of tragedy, but the former ought always to be carefully avoided. And certainly no dramatick writer ever ſucceeded better in raiſing *terror* in the minds of an audience than Shakſpeare has done. The whole

tragedy of *Macbeth*, but more eſpecially the ſcene where the King is murdered, in the ſecond Act, as well as this play, is a noble proof of that manly ſpirit with which he writ; and both ſhow how powerful he was, in giving the ſtrongeſt motions to our ſouls that they are capable of. I cannot leave *Hamlet*, without taking notice of the advantage with which we have ſeen this maſter-piece of Shakſpeare diſtinguiſh itſelf upon the ſtage, by Mr. Betterton's fine performance of that part. A man, who, though he had no other good qualities, as he has a great many, muſt have made his way into the eſteem of all men of letters, by this only excellency. No man is better acquainted with Shakſpeare's manner of expreſſion, and indeed he has ſtudied him ſo well, and is ſo much a maſter of him, that whatever part of his he performs, he does it as if it had been written on purpoſe for him, and that the author had exactly conceived it as he plays it. I muſt own a particular obligation to him, for the moſt conſiderable part of the paſſages relating to this life, which I have here tranſmitted to the publick; his veneration for the memory of Shakſpeare having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickſhire on purpoſe to gather up what remains he could, of a name for which he had ſo great a veneration.[2]

[2] ——*of a name for which he had ſo great a veneration.*] Mr. Betterton was born in 1635, and had many opportunities of collecting information relative to Shakſpeare, but unfortunately the age in which he lived was not an age of curioſity. Had either he or Dryden or Sir William D'Avenant taken the trouble to viſit our poet's youngeſt daughter, who lived till 1662, or his grand-daughter, who did not die till 1670, many particulars might have been preſerved which are now irrecoverably loſt. Shakſpeare's ſiſter, Joan Hart, who was only five years younger than him, died at Stratford in Nov. 1646, at the age of ſeventy-

To the foregoing Accounts of SHAKSPEARE'S LIFE, *I have only one Paſsage to add, which Mr.* Pope *related, as communicated to him by Mr.* Rowe.

IN the time of Elizabeth, coaches being yet uncommon, and hired coaches not at all in uſe, thoſe who were too proud, too tender, or too idle to walk, went on horſeback to any diſtant buſineſs or diverſion. Many came on horſeback to the play,[3] and when Shakſpeare fled to London from the terror of a criminal proſecution, his firſt expedient was to wait at the door of the playhouſe, and hold the horſes of thoſe that had no ſervants, that they might be ready again after the performance. In this office he became ſo conſpicuous for

ſix; and from her undoubtedly his two daughters, and his granddaughter Lady Barnard, had learned ſeveral circumſtances of his early hiſtory antecedent to the year 1600. MALONE.

This *Account of the Life of Shakſpeare* is printed from Mr. Rowe's ſecond edition, in which it had been abridged and altered by himſelf after its appearance in 1709. STEEVENS.

[3] *Many came on horſeback to the play,*] Plays were at this time performed in the afternoon. "The pollicie of plaies is very neceſſary, howſoever ſome ſhallow-brained cenſurers (not the deepeſt ſearchers into the ſecrets of government) mightily oppugne them. For whereas *the afternoon* being the idleſt time of the day wherein men that are their own maſters (as gentlemen of the court, the inns of the court, and a number of captains and ſoldiers about London) do wholly beſtow themſelves upon pleaſure, and that pleaſure they divide (how vertuouſly it ſkills not) either in gaming, following of harlots, drinking, or ſeeing a play, is it not better (ſince of four extreames all the world cannot keepe them but they will chooſe one) that they ſhould betake them to the leaſt, which is plaies?" Naſh's *Pierce Pennileſſe his Supplication to the Devil*, 1592. STEEVENS.

his care and readineſs, that in a ſhort time every man as he alighted called for Will. Shakſpeare, and ſcarcely any other waiter was truſted with a horſe while Will. Shakſpeare could be had. This was the firſt dawn of better fortune. Shakſpeare, finding more horſes put into his hand than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inſpection, who, when Will. Shakſpeare was ſummoned, were immediately to preſent themſelves, *I am Shakſpeare's boy, Sir.* In time, Shakſpeare found higher employment: but as long as the practice of riding to the playhouſe continued, the waiters that held the horſes retained the appellation of, *Shakſpeare's boys.*[4] JOHNSON.

[4] ——*the waiters that held the horſes retained the appellation of,* Shakſpeare's boys.] I cannot diſmiſs this anecdote without obſerving that it ſeems to want every mark of probability. Though Shakſpeare quitted Stratford on account of a juvenile irregularity, we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe that he had forfeited the protection of his father who was engaged in a lucrative buſineſs, or the love of his wife who had already brought him two children, and was herſelf the daughter of a ſubſtantial yeoman. It is unlikely therefore, when he was beyond the reach of his proſecutor, that he ſhould conceal his plan of life, or place of reſidence, from thoſe who, if he found himſelf diſtreſſed, could not fail to afford him ſuch ſupplies as would have ſet him above the neceſſity of *holding horſes* for ſubſiſtence. Mr. Malone has remarked in his *Attempt to aſcertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakſpeare were written,* that he might have found an eaſy introduction to the ſtage; for Thomas Green, a celebrated comedian of that period, was his townſman, and perhaps his relation. The genius of our author prompted him to write poetry; his connection with a player might have given his productions a dramatick turn; or his own ſagacity might have taught him that fame was not incompatible with profit, and that the theatre was an avenue to both. That it was once the general cuſtom to ride on horſe-back to the play, I am likewiſe yet to learn. The moſt popular of the theatres were on the Bankſide; and we are told by the ſatirical pamphleteers of that time, that the uſual mode of conveyance to theſe places of amuſement, was by water, but

Mr. Rowe has told us, that he derived the principal anecdotes in his account of Shakſpeare, from Betterton the player, whoſe zeal had induced him to viſit Stratford, for the ſake of procuring all poſſible intelligence concerning a poet to whoſe works he might juſtly think himſelf under the ſtrongeſt

not a ſingle writer ſo much as hints at the cuſtom of riding to them, or at the practice of having horſes held during the hours of exhibition. Some alluſion to this uſage, (if it had exiſted) muſt, I think, have been diſcovered in the courſe of our reſearches after contemporary faſhions. Let it be remembered too, that we receive this tale on no higher authority than that of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*, Vol. I. p. 130. "Sir William Davenant told it to Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe," who (according to Dr. Johnſon) related it to Mr. Pope. Mr. Rowe (if this intelligence be authentick) ſeems to have concurred with me in opinion, as he forebore to introduce a circumſtance ſo incredible into his Life of Shakſpeare. As to the book which furniſhes the anecdote, not the ſmalleſt part of it was the compoſition of Mr. Cibber, being entirely written by a Mr. Shiells, amanuenſis to Dr. Johnſon, when his Dictionary was preparing for the preſs. T. Cibber was in the King's Bench, and accepted of ten guineas from the bookſellers for leave to prefix his name to the work; and it was purpoſely ſo prefixed as to leave the reader in doubt whether himſelf or his father was the perſon deſigned.

The foregoing anecdote relative to Cibber's *Lives*, &c. I received from Dr. Johnſon. See, however, *The Monthly Review*, for December, 1781, p. 409. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens in one particular is certainly miſtaken. To the theatre in Blackfriars I have no doubt that many gentlemen rode in the time of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. From the Strand, Holborn, Biſhopſgate Street, &c. where many of the nobility lived, they could indeed go no other way than on foot, or on horſeback, or in coaches; and coaches till after the death of Elizabeth were extremely rare. Many of the gentry, therefore, certainly went to that playhouſe on horſeback. See the proofs, in the Eſſay above referred to.

This, however, will not eſtabliſh the tradition relative to our author's firſt employment at the playhouſe, which ſtands on a very ſlender foundation. MALONE.

obligations. Notwithſtanding this aſſertion, in the manuſcript papers of the late Mr. Oldys it is ſaid, that one Bowman (according to Chetwood, p. 143, "an actor more than half an age on the London theatres") was unwilling to allow that his aſſociate and contemporary Betterton had ever undertaken ſuch a journey.[5] Be this matter as it will, the following particulars, which I ſhall give in the words of Oldys, are, for aught we know to the contrary, as well authenticated as any of the anecdotes delivered down to us by Rowe.

Mr. Oldys had covered ſeveral quires of paper with laborious collections for a regular life of our author. From theſe I have made the following extracts, which (however trivial) contain the only

[5] ——*it is ſaid, that one* Bowman—*was unwilling to allow that his aſſociate and contemporary* Betterton *had ever undertaken ſuch a journey.*] This aſſertion of Mr. Oldys is altogether unworthy of credit. Why any doubt ſhould be entertained concerning Mr. Betterton's having viſited Stratford, after Rowe's poſitive aſſertion that he did ſo, it is not eaſy to conceive. Mr. Rowe did not go there himſelf; and how could he have collected the few circumſtances relative to Shakſpeare and his family, which he has told, if he had not obtained information from ſome friend who examined the Regiſter of the pariſh of Stratford, and made perſonal inquiries on the ſubject?

"Bowman," we are told, "was unwilling to *believe*," &c. But the fact diſputed did not require any exerciſe of his *belief*. Mr. Bowman was married to the daughter of Sir Francis Watſon, Bart. the gentleman with whom Betterton joined in an adventure to the Eaſt Indies, whoſe name the writer of Betterton's Life in *Biographia Britannica* has ſo ſtudiouſly concealed. By that unfortunate ſcheme Betterton loſt above 2000l. Dr. Ratcliffe 6000l. and Sir Francis Watſon his whole fortune. On his death ſoon after the year 1692, Betterton generouſly took his daughter under his protection, and educated her in his houſe. Here Bowman married her; from which period he continued to live in the moſt friendly correſpondence with Mr. Betterton, and muſt have *known* whether he went to Stratford or not. MALONE.

circumſtances that wear the leaſt appearance of novelty or information; the ſong in p. 62 excepted.

"If tradition may be truſted, Shakſpeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and ſprightly wit, and her huſband, Mr. John Davenant, (afterwards mayor of that city,) a grave melancholy man; who, as well as his wife, uſed much to delight in Shakſpeare's pleaſant company. Their ſon young Will. Davenant (afterwards Sir William) was then a little ſchool-boy in the town, of about ſeven or eight years old,[6] and ſo fond alſo of Shakſpeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from ſchool to ſee him. One day an old townſman obſerving the boy running homeward almoſt out of breath, aſked him whither he was poſting in that heat and hurry. He anſwered, to ſee his *god*-father Shakſpeare. There's a good boy, ſaid the other, but have a care that you don't take *God's* name in vain. This ſtory Mr. Pope told me at the Earl of Oxford's table, upon occaſion of ſome diſcourſe which aroſe about Shakſpeare's monument then newly erected in Weſtminſter Abbey;[7]

[6] ——*of about ſeven or eight years old,*] He was born at Oxford in February 1605-6. MALONE.

[7] —— Shakſpeare's *monument then newly erected in Weſtminſter Abbey*;] "This monument," ſays Mr. Granger, was erected in 1741, by the direction of the Earl of Burlington, Dr. Mead, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Martyn. Mr. Fleetwood and Mr. Rich gave each of them a benefit towards it, from one of Shakſpeare's own plays. It was executed by H. Scheemaker, after a deſign of Kent.

"On the monument is inſcribed—*amor publicus poſuit.* Dr. Mead objected to *amor publicus*, as not occurring in old claſſical

and he quoted Mr. Betterton the player for his authority. I anſwered, that I thought ſuch a ſtory might have enriched the variety of thoſe choice

inſcriptions; but Mr. Pope and the other gentlemen concerned inſiſting that it ſhould ſtand, Dr. Mead yielded the point, ſaying,

"Omnia vincit *amor*, nos et cedamus *amori*."

"This anecdote was communicated by Dr. Lort, late Greek Profeſſor of Cambridge, who had it from Dr. Mead himſelf."

It was recorded at the time in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1741, by a writer who objects to every part of the inſcription, and ſays it ought to have been, "G. S. centum viginti et quatuor poſt *obitum annis populus plaudens* [aut *favens*] poſuit."

The monument was opened Jan. 29, 1741. Scheemaker is ſaid to have got 300l. for his work. The performers at each houſe, much to their honour, performed *gratis*; and the Dean and Chapter of Weſtminſter took nothing for the ground. The money received by the performance at Drury Lane, amounted to above 200l. the receipts at Covent Garden to about 100l. Theſe particulars I learn from Oldys's MS. notes on Langbaine.

The ſcroll on the monument, as I learn from a letter to my father, dated June 27, 1741, remained for ſome time after the monument was ſet up, without any inſcription on it. This was a challenge to the wits of the time; which one of them accepted by writing a copy of verſes, the ſubject of which was a converſation ſuppoſed to paſs between Dr. Mead and Sir Thomas Hanmer, relative to the filling up of the ſcroll. I know not whether they are in print, and I do not chooſe to quote them all. The introductory lines, however, run thus:

"To learned Mead thus Hanmer ſpoke,
"Doctor, this empty ſcroll's a joke.
"Something it doubtleſs ſhould contain,
"Extremely ſhort, extremely plain;
"But wondrous deep, and wondrous pat,
"And fit for Shakſpeare to point at;" &c. MALONE.

At Drury Lane was acted *Julius Cæſar*, 28 April, 1738, when a prologue written by Benjamin Martyn, Eſq. was ſpoken by Mr. Quin, and an epilogue by James Noel, Eſq. ſpoken by Mrs. Porter. Both theſe are printed in *The General Dictionary*. At Covent Garden was acted *Hamlet*, 10th April, 1739, when a prologue written by Mr. Theobald, and printed in *The London Magazine* of that year, was ſpoken by Mr. Ryan. In the newſpaper of the day it was obſerved that this laſt repreſentation was far from being numerouſly attended. REED.

fruits of obſervation he has preſented us in his preface to the edition he had publiſhed of our poet's works. He replied—"There might be in the garden of mankind ſuch plants as would ſeem to pride themſelves more in a regular production of their own native fruits, than in having the repute of bearing a richer kind by grafting; and this was the reaſon he omitted it."[8]

The ſame ſtory, without the names of the perſons, is printed among the jeſts of John Taylor the Water-poet, in his works, folio, 1630, p. 184, N° 39: and, with ſome variations, may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books.[9]

[8] ——*and this was the reaſon he omitted it.*] Mr. Oldys might have added, that *he* was the perſon who ſuggeſted to Mr. Pope the ſingular courſe which he purſued in his edition of Shakſpeare. "Remember," ſays Oldys in a MS. note to his copy of Langbaine, Article, Shakſpeare, "what I obſerved to my Lord Oxford for Mr. Pope's uſe, out of Cowley's preface." The obſervation here alluded to, I believe, is one made by Cowley in his preface, p. 53, edit. 1710, 8vo: "This has been the caſe with Shakſpeare, Fletcher, Jonſon, and many others, part of whoſe poems I ſhould preſume to take the boldneſs to *prune and lop away*, if the care of *replanting them in print* did belong to me; neither would I make any ſcruple to cut off from ſome the unneceſſary young ſuckers, and from others the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vaſt volume, than in a gigantick body; on the contrary it is commonly more vigorous the leſs ſpace it animates, and as Statius ſays of little Tydeus,—

"——totos infuſa per artus,
"Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus."

Pope adopted this very unwarrantable idea; ſtriking out from the text of his author whatever he did not like: and Cowley himſelf has ſuffered a ſort of poetical puniſhment for having ſuggeſted it, the learned Biſhop of Worceſter [Dr. Hurd] having *pruned* and *lopped away* his beautiful luxuriances, as Pope, on Cowley's ſuggeſtion, did thoſe of Shakſpeare. MALONE.

[9] *The ſame ſtory—may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books.*] Antony Wood is the firſt and original author of the anec-

" One of Shakſpeare's younger brothers,[1] who

dote that Shakſpeare, in his journies from Warwickſhire to London, uſed to bait at the Crown-Inn on the weſt ſide of the corn market in Oxford. He ſays, that D'Avenant the poet was born in that houſe in 1606. " His father (he adds) John Davenant, was a ſufficient vintner, kept the tavern now known by the ſign of the *Crown*, and was mayor of the ſaid city in 1621. His mother was a very beautiful woman, of a good wit and converſation, in which ſhe was imitated by none of her children but by this *William* [the poet]. The father, who was a very grave and diſcreet citizen, (yet an admirer and lover of plays and play-makers, eſpecially *Shakſpeare*, who frequented his houſe in his journies between Warwickſhire and London,) was of a melancholick diſpoſition, and was ſeldom or never ſeen to laugh, in which he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert his eldeſt ſon, afterwards fellow of St. John's College, and a venerable Doctor of Divinity." Wood's *Ath. Oxon.* Vol. II. p. 292, edit. 1692. I will not ſuppoſe that Shakſpeare could have been the father of a Doctor of Divinity who never laughed; but it was always a conſtant tradition in Oxford that Shakſpeare was the father of Davenant the poet. And I have ſeen this circumſtance expreſsly mentioned in ſome of Wood's papers. Wood was well qualified to know theſe particulars; for he was a townsman of Oxford, where he was born in 1632. Wood ſays, that Davenant went to ſchool in Oxford. *Ubi ſupr.*

As to the *Crown Inn*, it ſtill remains as an inn, and is an old decayed houſe, but probably was once a principal inn in Oxford. It is directly in the road from Stratford to London. In a large upper room, which ſeems to have been a ſort of *Hall* for entertaining a large company, or for accommodating (as was the cuſtom) different parties at once, there was a bow-window, with three pieces of excellent painted glaſs. About eight years ago, I remember viſiting this room, and propoſing to purchaſe of the landlord the painted glaſs, which would have been a curioſity as coming from Shakſpeare's inn. But going thither ſoon after, I found it was removed; the inn-keeper having communicated my intended bargain to the owner of the houſe, who began to ſuſpect that he was poſſeſſed of a curioſity too valuable to be parted with, or to remain in ſuch a place: and I never could hear of it afterwards. If I remember right, the painted glaſs conſiſted of three armorial ſhields beautifully ſtained. I have ſaid ſo much on this ſubject, becauſe I think that Shakſpeare's old hoſtelry at Oxford deſerves no leſs reſpect than Chaucer's Tabarde in Southwark. T. WARTON.

lived to a good old age, even ſome years[z] as I compute, after the reſtoration of *King Charles II.* would in his younger days come to London to viſit his brother *Will*, as he called him, and be a ſpectator of him as an actor in ſome of his own plays. This cuſtom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and

[z] *One of Shakſpeare's younger brothers*, &c.] Mr. Oldys ſeems to have ſtudied the art of "marring a plain tale in the telling of it;" for he has in this ſtory introduced circumſtances which tend to diminiſh, inſtead of adding to, its credibility. *Male dum recitas, incipit eſſe tuus.* From Shakſpeare's not taking notice of any of his brothers or ſiſters in his will, except Joan Hart, I think it highly probable that they were all dead in 1616, except her, at leaſt all thoſe of the whole blood; though in the Regiſter there is no entry of the burial of either his brother Gilbert, or Edmund, antecedent to the death of Shakſpeare, or at any ſubſequent period.

The truth is, that this account of our poet's having performed the part of an old man in one of his own comedies, came originally from Mr. Thomas Joues, of Tarbick, in Worceſterſhire, who has been already mentioned, (ſee p. 62, n. 1,) and who related it from the information, not of one of Shakſpeare's *brothers*, but of a *relation* of our poet, who lived to a good old age, and who had ſeen him act in his youth. Mr. Jones's informer might have been Mr. Richard Quiney, who lived in London, and died at Stratford in 1656, at the age of 69; or Mr. Thomas Quiney, our poet's ſon-in-law, who lived, I believe, till 1663, and was twenty-ſeven years old when his father-in-law died; or ſome one of the family of Hathaway. Mr. Thomas Hathaway, I believe Shakſpeare's brother-in-law, died at Stratford in 1654-5, at the age of 85.

There was a Thomas Jones, an inhabitant of Stratford, who between the years 1581 and 1590 had four ſons, Henry, James, Edmund, and Iſaac: ſome one of theſe, it is probable, ſettled at Tarbick, and was the father of Thomas Jones, the relater of this anecdote, who was born about the year 1613.

If any of Shakſpeare's brothers lived till after the Reſtoration, and viſited the players, why were we not informed to what player he related it, and from what player Mr. Oldys had his account? The fact, I believe, is, he had it not from a player, but from the above-mentioned Mr. Jones, who likewiſe communicated the ſtanza of the ballad on Sir Thomas Lucy, which has been printed in a former page. MALONE.

his dramatick entertainments grew the greateſt ſupport of our principal, if not of all our theatres, he continued it ſeems ſo long after his brother's death, as even to the latter end of his own life. The curioſity at this time of the moſt noted actors [exciting them] to learn ſomething from him of his brother, &c. they juſtly held him in the higheſt veneration. And it may be well believed, as there was beſides a kinſman and deſcendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor among them, [*Charles Hart.*[2] See Shakſpeare's Will.] this opportunity made them greedily inquiſitive into every little circumſtance, more eſpecially in his dramatick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it ſeems, was ſo ſtricken in years, and poſſibly his memory ſo weakened with infirmities, (which might make him the eaſier paſs for a man of weak intellects,) that he could give them but little light into their enquiries; and all that could be recollected from him of his brother *Will.* in that ſtation was, the faint, general, and almoſt loſt ideas he had of having once ſeen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein being to perſonate a decrepit old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared ſo weak and drooping and unable to walk, that he was forced to be ſupported and carried by another perſon to a table, at which

[2] —— *Charles Hart.*] Mr. Charles Hart the player was born, I believe, about the year 1630, and died in or about 1682. If he was a grandſon of Shakſpeare's ſiſter, he was probably the ſon of Michael Hart, her youngeſt ſon, of whoſe marriage or death there is no account in the pariſh Regiſter of Stratford, and therefore I ſuſpect he ſettled in London. MALONE.

Charles Hart died in Auguſt, 1683, and was buried at Stanmore the 20th of that month. Lyſon's *Environs of London*, Vol. III. p. 400. REED.

he was ſeated among ſome company, who were eating, and one of them ſung a ſong." See the character of *Adam*, in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. ult.

" Verſes by Ben Jonſon and Shakſpeare, occaſioned by the motto to the Globe Theatre—*Totus mundus agit hiſtrionem.*

Jonſon.

' If, but *ſtage actors*, all the world diſplays,
' Where ſhall we find *ſpectators* of their plays?'

Shakſpeare.

' Little, or much, of what we ſee, we do;
' We are all both *actors* and *ſpectators* too.'

Poetical Characteriſticks, 8vo. MS. Vol. I. ſome time in the Harleian Library; which volume was returned to its owner."

" Old Mr. Bowman the player reported from Sir William Biſhop, that ſome part of Sir John Falſtaff's character was drawn from a townſman of Stratford, who either faithleſsly broke a contract, or ſpitefully refuſed to part with ſome land for a valuable conſideration, adjoining to Shakſpeare's, in or near that town."

To theſe anecdotes I can only add the following.

At the concluſion of the advertiſement prefixed to Lintot's edition of Shakſpeare's Poems, it is ſaid, " That moſt learned prince and great patron of learning, King James the Firſt, was pleaſed with

his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakſpeare; which letter, though now loſt, remained long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant,[3] as a credible perſon now living can teſtify."

Mr. Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Fuller's *Worthies*, obſerves, that "the ſtory came from the Duke of Buckingham, who had it from Sir William D'Avenant."

It appears from *Roſcius Anglicanus*, (commonly called Downes the prompter's book,) 1708, that Shakſpeare took the pains to inſtruct Joſeph Taylor in the character of *Hamlet*, and John Lowine in that of *King Henry VIII.* STEEVENS.

The late Mr. Thomas Oſborne, bookſeller, (whoſe exploits are celebrated by the author of the *Dunciad*,) being ignorant in what form or language our *Paradiſe Loſt* was written, employed one of his garretteers to render it from a French tranſlation into Engliſh proſe. Leſt, hereafter, the compoſitions of Shakſpeare ſhould be brought back into their native tongue from the verſion of Monſieur le Compte de Catuelan, le Tourneur, &c. it may be neceſſary to obſerve, that all the following particulars, extracted from the preface of theſe gentlemen, are as little founded in truth as their deſcription of the ridiculous Jubilee at Stratford, which

[3] ——*which letter, though now loſt, remained long in the hands of Sir* William D'Avenant,] Dr. Farmer with great probability ſuppoſes that this letter was written by King James in return for the compliment paid to him in *Macbeth*. The relater of this anecdote was *Sheffield*, Duke of Buckingham. MALONE.

they have been taught to repreſent as an affair of general approbation and national concern.

They ſay, that Shakſpeare came to London without a plan, and finding himſelf at the door of a theatre, inſtinctively ſtopped there, and offered himſelf to be a holder of horſes :—that he was remarkable for his excellent performance of the Ghoſt in *Hamlet* :—that he borrowed nothing from preceding writers :—that all on a ſudden he left the ſtage, and returned without eclat into his native country :—that his monument at Stratford is of copper :—that the courtiers of James I. paid ſeveral compliments to him which are ſtill preſerved :—that he relieved a widow, who, together with her numerous family, was involved in a ruinous lawſuit :—that his editors have reſtored many paſſages in his plays, by the aſſiſtance of the manuſcripts he left behind him, &c. &c.

Let me not, however, forget the juſtice due to theſe ingenious Frenchmen, whoſe ſkill and fidelity in the execution of their very difficult undertaking, is only exceeded by ſuch a diſplay of candour as would ſerve to cover the imperfections of much leſs elegant and judicious writers. STEEVENS.

STRATFORD REGISTER.

BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, *and* BURIALS, *of the* Shakſpeare *Family; tranſcribed from the Regiſter-Books of the Pariſh of* Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickſhire.[4]

JONE,[5] daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 15, 1558.

Margaret, daughter of John Shakſpere, was buried April 30, 1563.

WILLIAM, Son of John Shakſpere, was baptized April 26, 1564.[6]

Johanna, daughter of Richard Hathaway, otherwiſe Gardiner, of Shottery,[7] was baptized May 9, 1566.

[4] An inaccurate and very imperfect liſt of the baptiſms, &c. of Shakſpeare's family was tranſmitted by Mr. Weſt about eighteen years ago to Mr. Steevens. The liſt now printed I have extracted with great care from the Regiſters of Stratford; and I truſt, it will be found correct. MALONE.

[5] This lady Mr. Weſt ſuppoſed to have married the anceſtor of the Harts of Stratford; but he was certainly miſtaken. She died probably in her infancy. The wife of Mr. Hart was undoubtedly the *ſecond* Jone, mentioned below. Her ſon Michael was born in the latter end of the year 1608, at which time ſhe was above thirty-nine years old. The elder Jone would then have been near fifty. MALONE.

[6] He was born three days before, April 23, 1564. MALONE.

[7] This Richard Hathaway of Shottery was probably the father to *Anne Hathaway*, our poet's wife. There is no entry of her baptiſm, the Regiſter not commencing till 1558, two years after ſhe was born. Thomas, the ſon of this Richard Hathaway,

Gilbert, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized Oct. 13, 1566.

Jone,[8] daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized April 15, 1569.

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 28, 1571.

Richard, ſon of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized March 11, 1573. [1573-4.]

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakſpere, was buried April 4, 1579.

Edmund, ſon of Mr. John Shakſpere, was baptized May 3, 1580.

Suſanna, daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, was baptized May 26, 1583.

Elizabeth, daughter of Anthony Shakſpere, of Hampton,[9] was baptized February 10, 1583. [1583-4.]

was baptized at Stratford, April 12, 1569; John, another ſon, Feb. 3, 1574; and William, another ſon, Nov. 30, 1578. MALONE.

[8] It was common in the age of Queen Elizabeth to give the ſame chriſtian name to two children ſucceſſively. (Thus, Mr. Sadler, who was godfather to Shakſpeare's ſon, had two ſons who were baptized by the name of *John*. See note 1.) This was undoubtedly done in the preſent inſtance. The former Jone having probably died, (though I can find no entry of her burial in the Regiſter, nor indeed of many of the other children of John Shakſpeare) the name of Jone, a very favourite one in thoſe days, was transferred to another new-born child. This latter Jone married Mr. William Hart, a hatter in Stratford, ſome time, as I conjecture, in the year 1599, when ſhe was thirty years old; for her eldeſt ſon William was baptized there, Auguſt 28, 1600. There is no entry of her marriage in the Regiſter. MALONE.

[9] There was alſo a Mr. *Henry* Shakſpeare ſettled at Hampton-Lucy, as appears from the Regiſter of that pariſh:

1582——Lettice, daughter of Henry Shakſpeare, was baptized.
1585——James, ſon of Henry Shakſpeare, was baptized.
1589——James, ſon of Henry Shakſpeare, was buried.

There was a *Thomas* Shakſpeare ſettled at Warwick; for in

John Shakſpere and Margery Roberts were married Nov. 25, 1584.

Hamnet[1] and Judith, ſon and daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, were baptized February 2, 1584. [1584-5.]

Margery, wife of John Shakſpere, was buried Oct. 29, 1587.

the Rolls Chapel I found the inrolment of a deed made in the 44th year of Queen Elizabeth, conveying " to Thomas Shakſpeare of Warwick, yeoman, Sachbroke, *alias* Biſhop-Sachbroke, in Com. Warw." MALONE.

[1] Mr. Weſt imagined that our poet's only ſon was chriſtened by the name of *Samuel*, but he was miſtaken. Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who was related, if I miſtake not, to the Shakſpeare family, appears to have been ſponſor for his ſon; and his wife, Mrs. Judith Sadler, to have been godmother to Judith, the other twin-child. The name *Hamnet* is written very diſtinctly both in the entry of the baptiſm and burial of this child. *Hamnet* and *Hamlet* ſeem to have been conſidered as the ſame name, and to have been uſed indiſcriminately both in ſpeaking and writing. Thus, this Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who is a witneſs to Shakſpeare's Will, writes his chriſtian name, *Hamnet*; but the ſcrivener who drew up the will, writes it *Hamlet*. There is the ſame variation in the Regiſter of Stratford, where the name is ſpelt in three or four different ways. Thus, among the baptiſms we find, in 1591, " May 26, John, filius *Hamletti* Sadler;" and in 1583, " Sept. 13, Margaret, daughter to *Hamlet* Sadler." But in 1588, Sept. 20, we find " John, ſon to *Hamnet* Sadler;" in 1596, April 4, we have " Judith, filia *Hamnet* Sadler;" in 1597-8, " Feb. 3, Wilhelmus, filius *Hambnet* Sadler;" and in 1599, " April 23, Francis, filius *Hamnet* Sadler." This Mr. Sadler died in 1624, and the entry of his burial ſtands thus: " 1624, Oct. 26, *Hamlet* Sadler." So alſo in that of his wife: " 1623, March 23, Judith, uxor *Hamlet* Sadler."

The name of Hamlet occurs in ſeveral other entries in the Regiſter. Oct. 4, 1576, " *Hamlet*, ſon to Humphry Holdar," was buried; and Sept. 28, 1564, " Catharina, uxor *Hamoleti* Haſſal." Mr. *Hamlet* Smith, formerly of the borough of Stratford, is one of the benefactors annually commemorated there.

Our poet's only ſon, Hamnet, died in 1596, in the twelfth year of his age. MALONE.

Thomas,[2] ſon of Richard Queeny, was baptized Feb, 26, 1588. [1588-9.]

Urſula,[3] daughter of John Shakſpere, was baptized March 11, 1588. [1588-9.]

Thomas Greene, *alias* Shakſpere,[4] was buried March 6, 1589. [1589-90.]

[2] This gentleman married our poet's youngeſt daughter. He had three ſiſters, Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary, and five brothers; Adrian, born in 1586, Richard, born in 1587, William, born in 1593, John in 1597, and George, baptized April 9, 1600. George was curate of the pariſh of Stratford, and died of a conſumption. He was buried there April 11, 1624. In Doctor Hall's pocket-book is the following entry relative to him: "38, Mr. Quiney, tuſſi gravi cum magna phlegmatis copia, et cibi vomitu, feb. lenta debilitatus," &c. The caſe concludes thus: "Anno ſeq. (no year is mentioned in the caſe, but the preceding caſe is dated 1624,) in hoc malum incidebat. Multa fruſtra tentata;—placide cum Domino dormit. Fuit boni indolis, et pro juveni omnifariam doctus." MALONE.

[3] This Urſula, and her brothers, Humphrey and Philip, appear to have been the children of John Shakſpeare by Mary, his third wife, though no ſuch marriage is entered in the Regiſter. I have not been able to learn her ſurname, or in what church ſhe was married. She died in Sept. 1608.

It has been ſuggeſted to me that the John Shakſpeare here mentioned was an elder brother of our poet, (not his father,) born, like Margaret Shakſpeare, before the commencement of the Regiſter: but had this been the caſe, he probably would have been called John *the younger*, old Mr. Shakſpeare being alive in 1589. I am therefore of opinion that our poet's father was meant, and that he was thrice married. MALONE.

[4] A great many names occur in this Regiſter, with an *alias*, the meaning of which it is not very eaſy to aſcertain. I ſhould have ſuppoſed that the perſons thus deſcribed were illegitimate, and that this Thomas Greene was the ſon of one of our poet's kinſmen, by a daughter of Thomas Greene, Eſq. a gentleman who reſided in Stratford; but that in the Regiſter we frequently find the word *baſtard* expreſsly added to the names of the children baptized. Perhaps this latter form was only uſed in the caſe of ſervants, labourers, &c. and the illegitimate offspring of the higher order was more delicately denoted by an *alias*.

The Rev. Mr. Davenport obſerves to me that there are two

Humphrey, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized May 24, 1590.

Philip, ſon of John Shakſpere, was baptized Sept. 21, 1591.

Thomas,[5] ſon of Mr. Anthony Naſh, was baptized June 20, 1593.

Hamnet, ſon of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, was buried Aug. 11, 1596.

William, ſon of William Hart, was baptized Aug. 28, 1600.

Mr. John Shakſpeare was buried Sept. 8, 1601.

Mr. Richard Quiney,[6] Bailiff of Stratford, was buried May 31, 1602.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was baptized June 5, 1603.

Thomas, ſon of William Hart, hatter, was baptized July 24, 1605.

John Hall, gentleman, and Suſanna Shakſpere, were married June 5, 1607.

families at preſent in Stratford, (and probably ſeveral more) that are diſtinguiſhed by an *alias*. "The real name of one of theſe families is *Roberts*, but they generally go by the name of *Burford*. The anceſtor of the family came originally from Burford in Oxfordſhire, and was frequently called from this circumſtance by the name of Burford. This name has prevailed, and they are always now called by it; but they write their name, Roberts, *alias* Burford, and are ſo entered in the Regiſter.

"The real name of the other family is Smith, but they are more known by the name of *Buck*. The anceſtor of this family, from ſome circumſtance or other, obtained the nickname of Buck, and they now write themſelves, Smith, *alias* Buck." MALONE.

[5] This gentleman married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. His father, Mr. Anthony Naſh, lived at Welcombe, (where he had an eſtate,) as appears by the following entry of the baptiſm of another of his ſons: "1598, Oct. 15, John, ſon to Mr. Anthony Naſh, of *Welcombe*." MALONE.

[6] This was the father of Mr. Thomas Quiney, who married Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. MALONE.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was buried Dec. 17, 1607.

Elizabeth, daughter of John Hall, gentleman, was baptized Feb. 21, 1607. [1607-8.]

Mary Shakſpere, widow, was buried Sept. 9, 1608.

Michael, ſon of William Hart, was baptized Sept. 23, 1608.

Gilbert Shakſpeare, adoleſcens,[7] was buried Feb. 3, 1611. [1611-12.]

Richard Shakſpere, was buried February 4, 1612. [1612-13.]

Thomas Queeny and Judith Shakſpere[8] were married Feb. 10, 1615. [1615-16.]

William Hart,[9] hatter, was buried April 17, 1616.

[7] This was probably a ſon of Gilbert Shakſpeare, our poet's brother. When the elder Gilbert died, the Regiſter does not inform us; but he certainly died before his ſon. MALONE.

[8] This lady, who was our poet's youngeſt daughter, appears to have married without her father's knowledge, for he mentions her in his will as unmarried. Mr. Weſt, as I have already obſerved, was miſtaken in ſuppoſing ſhe was married in Feb. 1616, that is, in 1616-17. She was certainly married before her father's death. See a former note in p. 92, in which the entry is given exactly as it ſtands in the Regiſter.

As Shakſpeare the poet married his wife from Shottery, Mr. Weſt conjectured he might have become poſſeſſed of a remarkable *houſe*, and jointly with his wife conveyed it as a part of their daughter Judith's portion to Thomas Queeny. "It is certain," Mr. Weſt adds, "that one Queeny, an elderly gentleman, ſold it to —— Harvey, Eſq. of Stockton, near Southam, Warwickſhire, father of John Harvey Thurlby, Eſq. of Abington, near Northampton; and that the aforeſaid Harvey ſold it again to Samuel Tyler, Eſq. whoſe ſiſters, as his heirs, now enjoy it."

But how could Shakſpeare have conveyed this houſe, if he ever owned it, to Mr. Queeny, as a marriage portion with his daughter, concerning whom there is the following clauſe in his will, executed one month before his death: "Provided that if ſuch huſband as ſhe *ſhall* at the end of the ſaid three years be *married* unto," &c. MALONE.

[9] This William Hart was our poet's brother-in-law. He died, it appears, a few days before Shakſpeare. MALONE.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE,[1] gentleman, was buried April 25,[2] 1616.

Shakſpere, ſon of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was baptized Nov. 23, 1616.

Shakſpere, ſon of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was buried May 8, 1617.

Richard, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Feb. 9, 1617. [1617-18.]

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Aug. 29, 1619.

Anthony Naſh, Eſq.[3] was buried Nov. 18, 1622.

Mrs. Shakſpere[4] was buried Aug. 8, 1623.

Mr. Thomas Naſh was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Hall, April 22, 1626.

Thomas,[5] ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized April 13, 1634.

Dr. John Hall,[6] ["medicus peritiſſimus,"] was buried Nov. 26, 1635.

[1] He died, as appears from his monument, April 23d. MALONE.

[2] No one hath protracted the Life of *Shakſpeare* beyond 1616, except Mr. Hume; who is pleaſed to add a year to it, contrary to all manner of evidence. FARMER.

[3] Father of Mr. Thomas Naſh, the huſband of Elizabeth Hall. MALONE.

[4] This lady, who was the poet's widow, and whoſe maiden name was Anne Hathaway, died, as appears from her tomb-ſtone (ſee p. 61, n. 9.) at the age of 67, and conſequently was near eight years older than her huſband. I have not been able to aſcertain when or where they were married, but ſuſpect the ceremony was performed at Hampton-Lucy, or Billeſley, in Auguſt, 1582. The regiſter of the latter pariſh is loſt. MALONE.

[5] It appears from Lady Barnard's will that this Thomas Hart was alive in 1669. The Regiſter does not aſcertain the time of his death, nor that of his father. MALONE.

[6] It has been ſuppoſed that the family of Miller of Hide-Hall,

George, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Sept. 18, 1636.

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was buried Jan. 28, 1638. [1638-9.]

in the county of Herts, were deſcended from Dr. Hall's daughter Elizabeth; and to prove this fact, the following pedigree was tranſmitted ſome years ago by Mr. Whalley to Mr. Steevens:

John Hall=Suſanna, daughter and co-heireſs of William Shakſpeare.

Elizabeth Hall=Thomas Naſh, Eſq.

A daughter=Sir Reginald Forſter, of Warwickſhire.

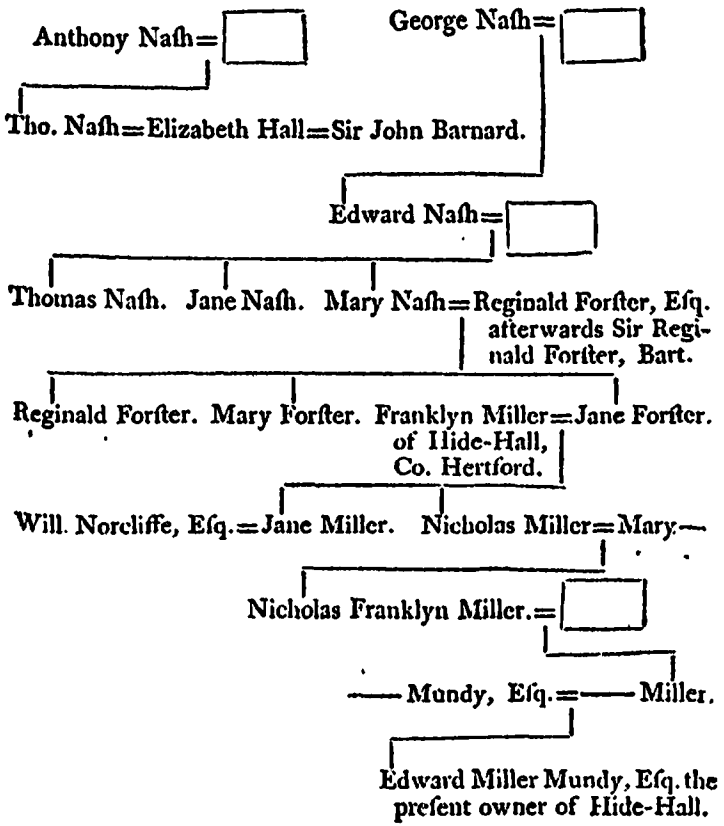
Franklyn Miller=Jane Forſter.
Of Hide-Hall, Co. Hertford.

Nicholas Miller=Mary ———.

Nicholas Franklyn Miller of Hide-Hall, the only ſurviving branch of the family of Miller.

But this pedigree is founded on a miſtake, and there is undoubtedly no lineal deſcendant of Shakſpeare now living. The miſtake was, the ſuppoſing that Sir Reginald Forſter married a daughter of Mr. Thomas Naſh and Elizabeth Hall, who had no iſſue, either by that gentleman or her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard. Sir Reginald Forſter married the daughter of Edward Naſh, Eſq. of Eaſt Greenwich, in the county of Kent, couſin-german to Mr. Thomas Naſh; and the pedigree ought to have been formed thus:

Richard, ſon of Thomas Quiney, was buried Feb. 26, 1638. [1638-9.]



That I am right in this ſtatement, appears from the will of Edward Naſh, (ſee p. 96, n. 8.) and from the following inſcription on a monument in the church of Stratford, erected ſome time after the year 1733, by Jane Norcliffe, the wife of William Norcliffe, Eſq. and only daughter of Franklyn Miller, by Jane Forſter:

"P. M. S.

"Beneath lye interred the body's of Sir Reginald Forſter, Baronet, and dame *Mary* his wife, daughter of *Edward* Naſh of Eaſt Greenwich, in the county of Kent," &c. For this inſcrip-

William Hart [7] was buried March 29, 1639.

Mary, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized June 18, 1641.

Joan Hart, widow, was buried Nov. 4, 1646.

Thomas Naſh, Eſq. was buried April 5, 1647.

Mrs. Suſanna Hall, widow, was buried July 16, 1649.

Mr. Richard Queeny,[8] gent. of London, was buried May 23, 1656.

George Hart, ſon of Thomas Hart, was married by Francis Smyth, Juſtice of peace, to Heſter Ludiate, daughter of Thomas Ludiate, Jan. 9, 1657. [1657-8.]

tion I am indebted to the kindneſs of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Reginald Forſter, Eſq. who lived at Greenwich, was created a Baronet, May 4, 1661. His ſon Reginald, who married Miſs Naſh, ſucceeded to the title on the death of his father, ſome time after the year 1679. Their only ſon, Reginald, was buried at Stratford, Aug. 10, 1685.

Mrs. Elizabeth Naſh was married to her ſecond huſband, Sir John Barnard, at Billeſley, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, June 5, 1649, and was buried at Abington in the county of Northampton, Feb. 17, 1669-70; and with her the family of our poet became extinct. MALONE.

[7] The eldeſt ſon of Joan Hart, our poet's ſiſter. I have not found any entry in the Regiſter of the deaths of his brothers Thomas and Michael Hart. The latter, I ſuſpect, ſettled in London, and was perhaps the father of Charles Hart, the celebrated tragedian, who, I believe, was born about the year 1630. MALONE.

[8] This gentleman was born in 1587, and was brother to Thomas Quiney, who married Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter. It does not appear when Thomas Quiney died. There is a defect in the Regiſter during the years 1642, 1643, and 1644; and another *lacuna* from March 17, to Nov. 18, 1663. Our poet's ſon-in-law probably died in the latter of thoſe periods; for his wife, who died in Feb. 1661-2, in the Regiſter of Burials for that year is deſcribed thus: "Judith, *uxor* Thomas Quiney." Had her huſband been then dead, ſhe would have been denominated *vidua*. MALONE.

Elizabeth, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Jan. 9, 1658. [1658-9.]

Jane, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Dec. 21, 1661.

Judith, wife of Thomas Quiney, gent. was buried Feb. 9, 1661. [1661-62.]

Suſanna, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 18, 1663. [1663-4.]

Shakſpeare, ſon of George Hart, was baptized Nov. 18, 1666.

Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 31, 1671.

Thomas, ſon of George Hart, was baptized March 3, 1673. [1673-4.]

George, ſon of George Hart, was baptized Aug. 20, 1676.

Margaret Hart,[9] widow, was buried Nov. 28, 1682.

Daniel Smith and Suſanna Hart were married April 16, 1688.

Shakſpeare Hart was married to Anne Prew, April 10, 1694.

William Shakſpeare, ſon of Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized Sept. 14, 1695.

Heſter, wife of George Hart, was buried April 29, 1696.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was baptized Aug. 9, 1700.

George, ſon of George and Mary Hart, was baptized Nov. 29, 1700.

George Hart[1] was buried May 3, 1702.

Heſter, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Feb. 10, 1702. [1702-3.]

[9] Probably the wife of Thomas Hart, who muſt have been married in or before the year 1633. The marriage ceremony was not performed at Stratford, there being no entry of it in the Regiſter. MALONE.

[1] He was born in 1636. MALONE.

Catharine, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was baptized July 19, 1703.

Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Oct. 7, 1705.

Mary, wife of George Hart, was buried Oct. 7, 1705.

George Hart was married to Sarah Mountford, Feb. 20, 1728. [1728-9.]

Thomas,[2] ſon of George Hart, Jun. was baptized May 9, 1729.

Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1733.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 29, 1738.

Anne, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1740.

William Shakſpeare, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized Jan. 8, 1743. [1743-4.]

William Shakſpeare, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 8, 1744. [1744-5.]

William, ſon of George Hart, was buried April 28, 1745.

George Hart[3] was buried Aug 29, 1745.

Thomas, ſon of William Shakſpeare Hart, was buried March 12, 1746. [1746-7.]

Shakſpeare Hart[4] was buried July 7, 1747.

Catharine, daughter of William Shakſpeare Hart, was baptized May 10, 1748.

[2] This Thomas Hart, who is the fifth in deſcent from Joan Hart, our poet's ſiſter, is now (1788) living at Stratford, in the houſe in which Shakſpeare was born. MALONE.

[3] He was born in 1676, and was great grandſon to Joan Hart. MALONE.

[4] He was born in 1666, and was alſo great grandſon to Joan Hart. MALONE.

William Shakſpeare Hart[5] was buried Feb. 28, 1749. [1749-50.]

The widow Hart[6] was buried July 10, 1753.

John, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 18, 1755.

Anne, daughter of Shakſpeare and Anne Hart, was buried Feb. 5, 1760.

Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 8, 1760.

Thomas, ſon of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 10, 1764.

Anne, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Jan. 16, 1767.

Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was buried Sept. 10, 1768.

Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was buried Oct. 31, 1774.

George Hart[7] was buried July 8, 1778.

[5] He was born in 1695. MALONE.

[6] This abſurd mode of entry ſeems to have been adopted for the purpoſe of concealment rather than information; for by the omiſſion of the chriſtian name, it is impoſſible to aſcertain from the Regiſter who was meant. The perſon here deſcribed was, I believe, Anne, the widow of Shakſpeare Hart, who died in 1747. MALONE.

[7] He was born in 1700. MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE'S COAT OF ARMS.

The following Inſtrument[8] *is copied from the Original in the College of Heralds: It is marked G.* 13, *p.* 349.

TO all and ſinguler noble and gentlemen of all eſtats and degrees, bearing arms, to whom theſe preſents ſhall come, William Dethick, Garter, Principall King of Arms of England, and William Camden, alias Clarencieulx, King of Arms for the ſouth, eaſt, and weſt parts of this realme, ſendethe greeting. Know ye, that in all nations and kingdoms the record and remembraunce of the valeant facts and vertuous diſpoſitions of worthie men have been made knowne and divulged by certeyne ſhields of arms and tokens of chevalrie; the grant and teſtimonie whereof apperteyneth unto us, by vertu of our offices from the Quenes moſt Exc. Majeſtie, and her Highenes moſt noble and victorious progenitors: wherefore being ſolicited, and by credible report informed, that John Shak-

[8] In the Herald's Office are the firſt draughts of John Shakſpeare's grant or confirmation of arms, by William Dethick, Garter, Principal King at Arms, 1596. See Vincent's *Preſs*, Vol. 157, No. 23, and 4. STEEVENS.

In a Manuſcript in the College of Heralds, marked W. 2. p 276, is the following note: "As for the *ſpeare in bend*, it is a patible difference, and the perſon to whom it was granted hath borne magiſtracy, and was juſtice of peace at Stratford-upon-Avon. He married the daughter and heire of *Arderne*, and was able to maintain that eſtate." MALONE.

ſpeare, now of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the counte of Warwick, gent. whoſe parent, great grandfather, and late anteceſſor, for his faithefull and approved ſervice to the late moſt prudent prince, king Henry VII. of famous memorie, was advaunced and rewarded with lands and tenements, geven to him in thoſe parts of Warwickſhere, where they have continewed by ſome deſcents in good reputacion and credit; and for that the ſaid John Shakſpeare having maryed the daughter and one of the heyrs of Robert Arden of Wellingcote, in the ſaid countie, and alſo produced this his auncient cote of arms, heretofore aſſigned to him whileſt he was her Majeſties officer and baylefe of that towne;[9] In conſideration of the premiſſes, and for the encouragement of his poſteritie, unto whom ſuche blazon of arms and achievements of inheritance from theyre ſaid mother, by the auncyent cuſtome and lawes of arms, maye lawfully deſcend; We the ſaid Garter and Clarencieulx have aſſigned, graunted, and by theſe preſents exemplefied unto the ſaid John Shakſpeare, and to his poſteritie, that ſhield and cote of arms, *viz. In a field of gould upon a bend ſables a ſpeare of the firſt, the poynt upward, hedded argent*; and for his creſt or cogniſance, *A falcon with his wyngs diſplayed, ſtanding on a wrethe of his coullers, ſupporting a ſpeare armed hedded, or ſteeled ſylver*, fyxed uppon a helmet with mantell and taſſels, as more playnely maye appeare depected on this margent; and we have likewiſe uppon on other eſcutcheon impaled the ſame with the aun-

[9] ——*his auncient cote of arms, heretofore aſſigned to him whileſt he was her Majeſties officer and baylefe of that towne*;] This grant of arms was made by —— Cook, Clarencieux, in 1569, but is not now extant in the Herald's Office.

MALONE

cyent arms of the ſaid Arden[1] of Wellingcote; ſignifieng therby, that it maye and ſhalbe lawfull for the ſaid John Shakſpeare gent. to beare and uſe the ſame ſhield of arms, ſingle or impaled, as aforſaid, during his natural lyfe; and that it ſhalbe lawfull for his children, yſſue, and poſteryte, (lawfully begotten,) to beare, uſe, and quarter, and ſhow forth the ſame, with theyre dewe differences, in all lawfull warlyke facts and civile uſe or exerciſes, according to the laws of arms, and cuſtome that to gentlemen belongethe, without let or interruption of any perſon or perſons, for uſe or bearing the ſame. In wyttneſſe and teſtemonye whereof we have ſubſcrebed our names, and faſtened the ſeals of our offices, geven at the Office of Arms, London, the day of in the xlii yere of the reigne of our moſt gratious Sovraigne lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God, quene of Ingland, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. 1599.

[1] —— *and we have likewiſe—impaled the ſame with the auncyent arms of the ſaid Arden* —] It is ſaid by Mr. Jacob, the modern editor of *Arden of Feverſham* (firſt publiſhed in 1592 and republiſhed in 1631 and 1770) that Shakſpeare *deſcended by the female line* from the gentleman whoſe unfortunate end is the ſubject of this tragedy. But the aſſertion appears to want ſupport, the true name of the perſon who was murdered at Feverſham being *Ardern* and not *Arden*. *Ardern* might be called *Arden* in the play for the ſake of better ſound, or might be corrupted in the *Chronicle* of Holinſhed: yet it is unlikely that the true ſpelling ſhould be overlooked among the Heralds, whoſe intereſt it is to recommend by oſtentatious accuracy the trifles in which they deal. STEEVENS.

Ardern was the original name, but in Shakſpeare's time it had been ſoftened to *Arden*. See p. 58, n. 5. MALONE.

Shakspeare's Autograph, if it had been written on Paper would have appeared thus.

Wm Shakspeare

MORTGAGE

MADE BY SHAKSPEARE,

A. D. 1612-13.

THE following is a tranſcript of a deed executed by our author three years before his death. The original deed, which was found in the year 1768, among the title deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fetherſtonhaugh, of Oxted, in the county of Surry, is now in the poſſeſſion of Mrs. Garrick, by whom it was obligingly tranſmitted to me through the hands of the Hon. Mr. Horace Walpole. Much has lately been ſaid in various publications relative to the proper mode of ſpelling Shakſpeare's name. It is hoped we ſhall hear no more idle babble upon this ſubject. He ſpelt his name himſelf as I have juſt now written it, without the middle *e*. Let this therefore for ever decide the queſtion.

It ſhould be remembered that to all ancient deeds were appended labels of parchment, which were inſerted at the bottom of the deed; on the upper part of which labels thus riſing above the reſt of the parchment, the executing parties wrote their names. Shakſpeare, not finding room for the whole of his name on the label, attempted to write the remaining letters at top, but having allowed himſelf only room enough to write the letter *a*, he gave the matter up. His hand-writing, of which a *fac-ſimile* is annexed, is much neater than many others, which I have ſeen, of that age. He neglected, however, to ſcrape the parchment, in conſequence of which the letters appear imperfectly formed.

He purchaſed the eſtate here mortgaged, from

Henry Walker, for 140l. as appears from the enrolment of the deed of bargain and ſale now in the Rolls-Chapel, dated the preceding day, March 10, 1612-13. The deed here printed ſhows that he paid down eighty pounds of the purchaſe-money, and mortgaged the premiſes for the remainder. This deed and the purchaſe deed were probably both executed on the ſame day, (March 10,) like our modern conveyance of Leaſe and Releaſe. MALONE.

THIS INDENTURE made the eleventh day of March, in the yeares of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lorde James, by the grace of God, king of England, Scotland, Fraunce, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. that is to ſay, of England, Fraunce and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the ſix-and-fortieth; Between William Shakeſpeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the Countie of Warwick, gentleman, William Johnſon, Citizen and Vintener of London, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng of London, gentlemen, of thone partie, and Henry Walker, Citizen and Minſtrell of London, of thother partie; Witneſſeth, that the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, have demiſed, graunted, and to ferme letten, and by theis preſents do demiſe, graunt, and to ferme lett unto the ſaid Henry Walker, all that dwelling houſe or tenement, with thappurtenaunts, ſituate and being within the precinct, circuit and compaſſe of the late Black ffryers, London, ſometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner, Eſquire, and ſince that in the tenure of John Forteſcue, gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupation of one William Ireland, or of his aſſignee or aſſignees; abutting upon a ſtreete leading downe to Puddle Wharfe, on the eaſt part, right

againſt the kings Majeſties Wardrobe; part of which ſaid tenement is erected over a greate gate leading to a capitall meſſuage, which ſometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell, Eſquire, deceaſed, and ſince that in the tenure or occupation of the right honourable Henry now Earle of Northumberlande: And alſo all that plott of ground on the weſt ſide of the ſame tenement, which was lately incloſed with boords on two ſides thereof, by Anne Baton, widow, ſo farre and in ſuch ſorte as the ſame was incloſed by the ſaid Anne Baton, and not otherwiſe; and being on the third ſide incloſed with an old brick wall; which ſaid plott of ground was ſometyme parcell and taken out of a great voyde peece of ground lately uſed for a garden; and alſo the ſoyle whereupon the ſaid tenement ſtandeth; and alſo the ſaid brick wall and boords which doe incloſe the ſaid plott of ground; with free entrie, acceſſe, ingreſſe, and regreſſe, in, by, and through, the ſaid great gate and yarde there, unto the uſual dore of the ſaid tenement: And alſo all and ſingular cellors, ſollers, romes, lights, eaſiaments, profitts, commodities, and appurtenaunts whatſoever to the ſaid dwelling-houſe or tenement belonging or in any wiſe apperteyning: TO HAVE and to HOLDE the ſaid dwelling-houſe or tenement, cellers, ſollers, romes, plott of ground, and all and ſingular other the premiſſes above by theis preſents mentioned to bee demiſed, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, unto the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators, and aſſignes, from the feaſt of thannunciacion of the bleſſed Virgin Marye next coming after the date hereof, unto thende and terme of One hundred yeares from thence next enſuing, and fullie to be compleat

and ended, withoute impeachment of, or for, any manner of waſte: YELDING and paying therefore yearlie during the ſaid terme unto the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, their heires and aſſignes, a pepper corne at the feaſt of Eaſter yearly, yf the ſame be lawfullie demaunded, and noe more. PROVIDED alwayes, that if the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, his heires, executors, adminiſtrators or aſſignes, or any of them, doe well and trulie paie or cauſe to be paid to the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators, or aſſignes, the ſum of threeſcore pounds of lawfull money of England, in and upon the nyne and twentieth day of September next coming after the date hereof, at, or in, the nowe dwelling-houſe of the ſaid Henry Walker, ſituate and being in the pariſh of Saint Martyn neer Ludgate, of London, at one entier payment without delaie; That then and from thenesforth this preſente leaſe, demiſe and graunt, and all and every matter and thing herein conteyned (other then this proviſoe) ſhall ceaſe, determine, and bee utterlie voyde, fruſtrate, and of none effect, as though the ſame had never beene had, ne made; theis preſents or any thing therein conteyned to the contrary thereof in any wiſe notwithſtanding. And the ſaid William Shakeſpeare for himſelfe, his heires, executors, and adminiſtrators, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promiſſe and graunt to, and with, the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators and aſſignes, and everie of them, by theis preſentes, that he the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, his heires, executors, adminiſtrators or aſſignes, ſhall and will cleerlie acquite, exonerate and diſcharge, or from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, well and ſuffi-

cientlie ſave and keepe harmleſs the ſaid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiſtrators, and aſſignes, and every of them, and the ſaid premiſſes by theis preſents demiſed, and every parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, of and from all and al manner of former and other bargaynes, ſales, guiftes, graunts, leaſes, jointures, dowers, intailes, ſtatuts, recognizaunces, judgments, executions; and of, and from, all and every other charge, titles, troubles, and incumbrances whatſoever by the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, John Jackſon, and John Hemyng, or any of them, or by their or any of their meanes, had made, committed or done, before thenſealing and delivery of theis preſents, or hereafter before the ſaid nyne and twentieth day of September next comming after the date hereof, to bee had, made, committed or done, except the rents and ſervits to the cheef lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premiſſes, for, or in reſpect of, his or their ſegnorie or ſeignories onlie, to bee due and done.

IN WITNESSE whereof the ſaid parties to theis indentures interchangeablie have ſett their ſeales. Yeoven the day and years firſt above written, 1612 [1612-13].

Wm Shakspe.[a] *Wm Johnſon.* *Jo. Jackſon.*

Enſealed and delivered by the ſaid William Shakeſpeare, William Johnſon, and John Jackſon,[2] *in the preſence of*

Will. Atkinſon.
Ed. Oudry.
Robert Andrews, Scr.[3]
Henry Lawrence, Servant to the ſaid Scr.

[2] John Heming did not ſign, or ſeal. MALONE.

[3] i. e. Scrivener. MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE'S WILL,

FROM THE ORIGINAL

In the Office of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

Viceſimo quinto die Martii,[4] *Anno Regni Domini noſtri Jacobi nunc Regis Angliæ, &c. decimo quarto, et Scotiæ quadrageſimo nono. Anno Domini* 1616.

IN the name of God, Amen. I William Shakſpeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, gent. in perfect health and memory, (God be praiſed!) do make and ordain this my laſt will and teſtament in manner and form following; that is to ſay:

Firſt, I commend my ſoul into the hands of God my creator, hoping, and aſſuredly believing, through the only merits of Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlaſting; and my body to the earth whereof it is made.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Judith, one hundred and fifty pounds of lawful Engliſh money, to be paid unto her in manner and form following; that is to ſay, one hundred pounds

[4] Our poet's will appears to have been drawn up in February, though not executed till the following month; for *February* was firſt written, and afterwards ſtruck out, and *March* written over it. MALONE.

in diſcharge of her marriage portion within one year after my deceaſe, with conſideration after the rate of two ſhillings in the pound for ſo long time as the ſame ſhall be unpaid unto her after my deceaſe; and the fifty pounds reſidue thereof, upon her ſurrendering of, or giving of ſuch ſufficient ſecurity as the overſeers of this my will ſhall like of, to ſurrender or grant, all her eſtate and right that ſhall deſcend or come unto her after my deceaſe, or that ſhe now hath, of, in, or to, one copyhold tenement, with the appurtenances, lying and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforeſaid, in the ſaid county of Warwick, being parcel or holden of the manor of Rowington, unto my daughter Suſanna Hall, and her heirs for ever.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my ſaid daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds more, if ſhe, or any iſſue of her body, be living at the end of three years next enſuing the day of the date of this my will, during which time my executors to pay her conſideration from my deceaſe according to the rate aforeſaid: and if ſhe die within the ſaid term without iſſue of her body, then my will is, and I do give and bequeath one hundred pounds thereof to my niece[5] Elizabeth Hall, and the fifty pounds to be ſet forth by my executors during the life of my ſiſter Joan Hart, and the uſe and profit thereof coming, ſhall be paid to my ſaid ſiſter Joan, and after her deceaſe the ſaid fifty pounds ſhall remain amongſt the children of my ſaid ſiſter, equally to be divided amongſt them; but if my

[5] —— *to my* niece —] Elizabeth Hall was our poet's grand-daughter. So, in *Othello*, Act I. ſc. i. Iago ſays to Brabantio: "You'll have your *nephews* neigh to you;" meaning his grand-children. See the note there. MALONE.

ſaid daughter Judith be living at the end of the ſaid three years, or any iſſue of her body, then my will is, and ſo I deviſe and bequeath the ſaid hundred and fifty pounds to be ſet out by my executors and overſeers for the beſt benefit of her and her iſſue, and the ſtock not to be paid unto her ſo long as ſhe ſhall be married and covert baron; but my will is, that ſhe ſhall have the conſideration yearly paid unto her during her life, and after her deceaſe the ſaid ſtock and conſideration to be paid to her children, if ſhe have any, and if not, to her executors or aſſigns, ſhe living the ſaid term after my deceaſe: provided that if ſuch huſband as ſhe ſhall at the end of the ſaid three years be married unto, or at any [time] after, do ſufficiently aſſure unto her, and the iſſue of her body, lands anſwerable to the portion by this my will given unto her, and to be adjudged ſo by my executors and overſeers, then my will is, that the ſaid hundred and fifty pounds ſhall be paid to ſuch huſband as ſhall make ſuch aſſurance, to his own uſe.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my ſaid ſiſter Joan twenty pounds, and all my wearing apparel, to be paid and delivered within one year after my deceaſe; and I do will and deviſe unto her the houſe, with the appurtenances, in Stratford, wherein ſhe dwelleth, for her natural life, under the yearly rent of twelve-pence.

Item, I give and bequeath unto her three ſons, William Hart, —— Hart,[6] and Michael Hart,

[6] ——*Hart*,] It is ſingular that neither Shakſpeare nor any of his family ſhould have recollected the chriſtian name of his nephew, who was born at Stratford but eleven years before the making of his will. His chriſtian name was *Thomas*; and he was baptized in that town, July 24, 1605. MALONE.

five pounds apiece, to be paid within one year after my deceaſe.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the ſaid Elizabeth Hall all my plate, (except my broad ſilver and gilt bowl,[7]) that I now have at the date of this my will.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the poor of Stratford aforeſaid ten pounds; to Mr. Thomas Combe[8] my ſword; to Thomas Ruſſel, eſq. five pounds; and to Francis Collins[9] of the borough of Warwick, in the county of Warwick, gent. thirteen pounds ſix ſhillings and eight-pence, to be paid within one year after my deceaſe.

[7] ——*except my broad ſilver and gilt* bowl,] This bowl, as we afterwards find, our poet bequeathed to his daughter Judith. Inſtead of *bowl*, Mr. Theobald, and all the ſubſequent editors, have here printed *hoxes*. MALONE.

Mr. Malone meant—*b*oxes; but he has charged us all with having printed h*oxes*, which we moſt certainly have not printed. STEEVENS.

[8] —— *Mr. Thomas Combe*,] This gentleman was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 9, 1588-9, ſo that he was twenty-ſeven years old at the time of Shakſpeare's death. He died at Stratford in July 1657, aged 68; and his elder brother William died at the ſame place, Jan. 30, 1666-7, aged 80. Mr. Thomas Combe by his will made June 20, 1656, directed his executors to convert all his perſonal property into money, and to lay it out in the purchaſe of lands, to be ſettled on William Combe, the eldeſt ſon of John Combe of Allchurch in the county of Worceſter, Gent. and his heirs male; remainder to his two brothers ſucceſſively. Where, therefore, our poet's ſword has wandered, I have not been able to diſcover. I have taken the trouble to aſcertain the ages of Shakſpeare's friends and relations, and the time of their deaths, becauſe we are thus enabled to judge how far the traditions concerning him which were communicated to Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century, are worthy of credit. MALONE.

[9] —— *to Francis Collins*—] This gentleman, who was the ſon of Mr. Walter Collins, was baptized at Stratford, Dec. 24, 1582. I know not when he died. MALONE.

Item, I give and bequeath to Hamlet [*Hamnet*] Sadler[1] twenty-ſix ſhillings eight pence, to buy him a ring; to William Reynolds, gent. twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence, to buy him a ring; to my godſon William Walker,[2] twenty ſhillings in gold; to Anthony Naſh,[3] gent. twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence; and to Mr. John Naſh,[4] twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence; and to my fellows, John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell,[5] twenty-ſix ſhillings eight-pence apiece, to buy them rings.

Item, I give, will, bequeath, and deviſe, unto my daughter Suſanna Hall, for better enabling of her to perform this my will, and towards the performance thereof, all that capital meſſuage or tene-

[1] —— *to Hamnet Sadler*—] This gentleman was godfather to Shakſpeare's only ſon, who was called after him. Mr. Sadler, I believe, was born about the year 1550, and died at Stratford-upon-Avon, in October 1624. His wife, Judith Sadler, who was godmother to Shakſpeare's youngeſt daughter, was buried there, March 23, 1613-14. Our poet probably was godfather to their ſon *William*, who was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 5, 1597-8. MALONE.

[2] —— *to my godſon, William Walker*,] William, the ſon of Henry Walker, was baptized at Stratford, Oct. 16, 1608. I mention this circumſtance, becauſe it aſcertains that our author was at his native town in the autumn of that year. Mr. William Walker was buried at Stratford, March 1, 1679-80. MALONE.

[3] —— *to Anthony Naſh*,] He was father of Mr. Thomas Naſh, who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. He lived, I believe, at Welcombe, where his eſtate lay; and was buried at Stratford, Nov. 18, 1622. MALONE.

[4] —— *to Mr. John Naſh*,] This gentleman died at Stratford, and was buried there, Nov. 10, 1623. MALONE.

[5] —— *to my fellows, John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell*,] Theſe our poet's *fellows* did not very long ſurvive him. Burbage died in March, 1619; Cundell in December, 1627; and Heminge in October 1630. See their wills in *The Account of our old Actors*, in Vol. III. MALONE.

ment, with the appurtenances, in Stratford aforeſaid, called The New Place, wherein I now dwell, and two meſſuages or tenements, with the appurtenances, ſituate, lying, and being in Henley-ſtreet, within the borough of Stratford aforeſaid; and all my barns, ſtables, orchards, gardens, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatſoever, ſituate, lying, and being, or to be had, received, perceived,[6] or taken, within the towns, hamlets, villages, fields, and grounds of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe,[7] or in any of them, in the ſaid county of Warwick; and alſo all that meſſuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, wherein one John Robinſon dwelleth, ſituate, lying, and being, in the Blackfriars in London near the Wardrobe;[8] and all other my

[6] ——*received, perceived,*] Inſtead of theſe words, we have hitherto had in all the printed copies of this will, *reſerved, preſerved.* MALONE.

[7] —— *Old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe,*] The lands of Old Stratford, Biſhopton, and Welcombe, here deviſed, were in Shakſpeare's time a continuation of one large field, all in the pariſh of Stratford. Biſhopton is two miles from Stratford, and Welcombe one. For *Biſhopton*, Mr. Theobald erroneouſly printed *Buſhaxton*, and the error has been continued in all the ſubſequent editions. The word in Shakſpeare's original will is ſpelt *Buſhopton*, the vulgar pronunciation of Biſhopton.

I ſearched the Indexes in the Rolls chapel from the year 1589 to 1616, with the hope of finding an enrolment of the purchaſe-deed of the eſtate here deviſed by our poet, and of aſcertaining its extent and value; but it was not enrolled during that period, nor could I find any inquiſition taken after his death, by which its value might have been aſcertained. I ſuppoſe it was conveyed by the former owner to Shakſpeare, not by bargain and ſale, but by a deed of feoffment, which it was not neceſſary to enroll. MALONE.

[8] —— *that meſſuage or tenement—in the Blackfriars in Lon-*

lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatſoever; to have and to hold all and ſingular the ſaid premiſes, with their appurtenances, unto the ſaid Suſanna Hall, for and during the term of her natural life; and after her deceaſe to the firſt ſon of her body lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid firſt ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to the ſecond ſon of her body lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid ſecond ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch heirs, to the third ſon of the body of the ſaid Suſanna lawfully iſſuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the ſaid third ſon lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, the ſame ſo to be and remain to the fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh ſons of her body, lawfully iſſuing one after another, and to the heirs males of the bodies of the ſaid fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh ſons lawfully iſſuing, in ſuch manner as it is before limited to be and remain to the firſt, ſecond, and third ſons of her body, and to their heirs males; and for default of ſuch iſſue, the ſaid premiſes to be and remain to my ſaid niece Hall, and the heirs males of her body lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to my daughter Judith, and the heirs males of her body lawfully iſſuing; and for default of ſuch iſſue, to the right heirs of me the ſaid William Shakſpeare for ever.

don near the Wardrobe;] This was the houſe which was mortgaged to Henry Walker. See p. 149.

By *the Wardrobe* is meant the King's Great Wardrobe, a royal houſe, near Puddle-Wharf, purchaſed by King Edward the Third from Sir John Beauchamp, who built it. King Richard III. was lodged in this houſe in the ſecond year of his reign. See Stowe's *Survey*, p. 693, edit. 1618. After the fire of London this office was kept in the Savoy; but it is now aboliſhed.

MALONE.

William
Shakspere

Willm Shakspere

By me William Shakspere

witness to the publishing
hereof. Fra: Collyns
Jeremy Shaw
John Robinson
Hamnet Sadler
Robert Wyatt

G. Steevens, delineavit 1776.

Item, I give unto my wife my ſecond beſt bed, with the furniture.[9]

Item, I give and bequeath to my ſaid daughter Judith my broad ſilver gilt bowl. All the reſt of my goods, chattels, leaſes, plate, jewels, and houſhold ſtuff whatſoever, after my debts and legacies paid, and my funeral expences diſcharged, I give deviſe, and bequeath to my ſon-in-law, John Hall, gent. and my daughter Suſanna his wife, whom I ordain and make executors of this my laſt will and teſtament. And I do entreat and appoint the ſaid Thomas Ruſſel, eſq. and Francis Collins, gent. to be overſeers hereof. And do revoke all former wills, and publiſh this to be my laſt will and teſtament. In witneſs whereof I have hereunto put my hand, the day and year firſt above written.

By me William Shakſpeare.

Witneſs to the publiſhing hereof,

Fra. Collyns,[2]
Julius Shaw,[3]
John Robinſon,[4]
Hamnet Sadler,[5]
Robert Whattcott.

[9] —— *my* ſecond *beſt bed, with the furniture.*] Thus Shakſpeare's original will. Mr. Theobald and the other modern editors have been more bountiful to Mrs. Shakſpeare, having printed inſtead of theſe words, "—my *brown* beſt bed, with the furniture." MALONE.

It appears, in the original will of Shakſpeare, (now in the Prerogative-Office, Doctor's Commons,) that he had forgot his wife; the legacy to her being expreſſed by an interlineation, as well as thoſe to Heminge, Burbage, and Condell.

The will is written on three ſheets of paper, the two laſt of which are undoubtedly ſubſcribed with Shakſpeare's own hand. The firſt indeed has his name in the margin, but it differs ſomewhat in ſpelling as well as manner, from the two ſignatures that

Probatum fuit teſtamentum ſupraſcriptum apud London, coram Magiſtro William Byrde, Legum Doctore, &c. viceſimo ſecundo die menſis Junii, Anno Domini 1616; *juramento Johannis Hall unius ex. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat. reſervata poteſtate, &c. Suſannæ Hall, alt ex. &c. eam cum venerit, &c. petitur. &c.*

follow. The reader will find a fac-ſimile of all the three, as well as thoſe of the witneſſes, oppoſite this page. STEEVENS.

The name at the top of the margin of the firſt ſheet was probably written by the ſcrivener who drew the will. This was the conſtant practice in Shakſpeare's time. MALONE.

[1] By me *William Shakſpeare.*] This was the mode of our poet's time. Thus the Regiſter of Stratford is ſigned at the bottom of each page, in the year 1616: "*Per me* Richard Watts, Miniſter." Theſe concluding words have hitherto been inaccurately exhibited thus: "*—the day and year firſt above-written by me,* William Shakſpeare." Neither the day, nor year, nor any preceding part of this will, was written by our poet. "*By me,*" &c. only means—*The above is the will of me* William Shakſpeare. MALONE.

[2] —— *Fra. Collins,*] See p. 157. MALONE.

[3] —— *Julius Shaw,*] was born in Sept. 1571. He married Anne Boyes, May 5, 1594; and died at Stratford in June 1629. MALONE.

[4] —— *John Robinſon,*] John, ſon of Thomas Robinſon, was baptized at Stratford, Nov. 30, 1589. I know not when he died. MALONE.

[5] —— *Hamnet Sadler.*] See p. 158. MALONE.

THE

DEDICATION OF THE PLAYERS.

TO THE

MOST NOBLE AND INCOMPARABLE PAIRE OF BRETHREN,

WILLIAM,

Earle of PEMBROKE, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſtie;

AND

PHILIP,

Earle of MONTGOMERY, &c. Gentleman of his Majeſties Bed-chamber.

Both Knights of the Moſt Noble Order of the Garter, and our ſingular good LORDS.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

WHILST we ſtudie to be thankfull in our particular, for the many favors we have received from your L. L. we are falne upon the ill fortune, to mingle two the moſt diverſe things that can be, feare, and raſhneſſe; raſhneſſe in the enterprize, and feare of the ſucceſſe. For, when we value the places your H. H. ſuſtaine, wee cannot but know the dignity greater, than to deſcend to the reading of theſe trifles: and, while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourſelves of the de-

fence of our dedication. But ſince your L. L. have been pleaſed to thinke theſe trifles ſomething, heretofore; and have proſequuted both them, and their authour living, with ſo much favour; we hope that (they out-living him, and he not having the fate, common with ſome, to be exequutor to his owne writings) you will uſe the ſame indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any booke chooſe his patrones, or find them: this hath done both. For ſo much were your L. L. likings of the ſeveral parts, when they were acted, as before they were publiſhed, the volume aſked to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphanes guardians; without ambition either of ſelfe-profit, or fame: onely to keepe the memory of ſo worthy a friend, and fellow alive, as was our SHAKSPEARE, by humble offer of his playes, to your moſt noble patronage. Wherein, as we have juſtly obſerved no man to come neere your L. L. but with a kind of religious addreſſe, it hath bin the height of our care, who are the preſenters, to make the preſent worthy of your H. H. by the perfection. But, there we muſt alſo crave our abilities to be conſidered, my lords. We cannot goe beyond our owne powers. Country hands reach forth milke, creame, fruits, or what they have: and many nations (we have heard) that had not gummes and incenſe, obtained their requeſts with a leavened cake.[6] It was no fault to approach their

[6] *Country hands reach forth* milk, &c. *and many nations—that had not gummes and* incenſe, *obtained their requeſts with a leavened cake.*] This ſeems to have been one of the commonplaces of dedication in Shakſpeare's age. We find it in Morley's Dedication of a Book of Songs to Sir Robert Cecil, 1595: "I have preſumed (ſays he) to make offer of theſe ſimple compoſi-

gods by what meanes they could: and the moſt, though meaneſt, of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to temples. In that name therefore, we moſt humbly conſecrate to your H. H. theſe remaines of your ſervant SHAKSPEARE; that what delight is in them may be ever your L. L. the reputation his, and the faults ours, if any be committed, by a paire ſo carefull to ſhew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is

Your Lordſhippes moſt bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRY CONDELL.

tions of mine, imitating (right honourable) in this the cuſtoms of the old world, who wanting *incenſe* to offer up to their gods, made ſhift inſteade thereof to honour them with *milk*." The ſame thought (if I recollect right) is again employed by the players in their dedication of Fletcher's plays, folio 1647.

MALONE.

THE

PREFACE

OF

THE PLAYERS.

TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS,

FROM the moſt able, to him that can but ſpell; there are you numbered, we had rather you were weighed. Eſpecially, when the fate of all bookes depends upon your capacities: and not of your heads alone, but of your purſes. Well! it is now publique, and you will ſtand for your priviledges, wee know: to read, and cenſure. Doe ſo, but buy it firſt. That doth beſt commend a booke, the ſtationer ſaies. Then, how odde ſoever your braines be, or your wiſdomes, make your licence the ſame, and ſpare not. Judge your ſixe-pen'orth,[7]

[7] *Judge your ſixe-pen'orth,* &c.] So, in the Induction to Ben Jonſon's *Bartholomew Fair*: "—it ſhall be lawful for any man to *judge his ſix-pen'worth, his twelve-pen'worth,* ſo to his eighteen pence, two ſhillings, half a crown, to the value of his place; provided always his place get not above his wit. And if he pay for half a dozen, he may cenſure for all them too, ſo that he will undertake that they ſhall be ſilent. He ſhall put in for cenſurers here, as they do for lots at the lottery: marry, if he drop but ſix-pence at the door, and will cenſure a crowns-worth, it is thought there is no conſcience or juſtice in that."

Perhaps Old Ben was author of the *Players' Preface*, and, in the inſtance before us, has borrowed from himſelf. STEEVENS.

your ſhillings worth, your five ſhillings worth at a time, or higher, ſo you riſe to the juſt rates, and welcome. But, whatever you doe, buy. Cenſure will not drive a trade, or make the jacke goe. And though you be a magiſtrate of wit, and ſit on the ſtage at Black-friars, or the Cockpit, to arraigne plays dailie, know, theſe playes have had their triall already, and ſtood out all appeales; and do now come forth quitted rather by a decree of court, than any purchaſed letters of commendation.

It had bene a thing, we confeſſe, worthie to have been wiſhed, that the author himſelfe had lived to have ſet forth, and overſeen his owne writings; but ſince it hath been ordained otherwiſe, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie his friends the office of their care and paine, to have collected and publiſhed them; and ſo to have publiſhed them, as where[8] (before) you were abuſed with divers ſtolne and ſurreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and ſtealthes of injurious impoſters, that expoſed them, even thoſe are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbes; and all the reſt, abſolute in their numbers as he conceived them: who, as he was a happy imitator of nature, was a moſt gentle expreſſer of it. His mind and hand went together; and what he thought, he uttered with that eaſineſſe, that wee have ſcarce received from him a blot in his papers.[9] But it is not our province, who onely gather his workes, and give them you, to praiſe him. It is yours that reade him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will finde enough, both to draw, and hold you: for his wit can no more lie hid,

[8] —— *as* where—] i. e. whereas. MALONE.

[9] Probably they had few of his MSS. STEEVENS.

then it could be loſt. Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe: and if then you doe not like him, ſurely you are in ſome manifeſt danger, not to underſtand him. And ſo we leave you to other of his friends, who, if you need, can bee your guides: if you neede them not, you can leade yourſelves, and others. And ſuch readers we wiſh him.

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRY CONDELL.

MR. POPE'S

PREFACE.

IT is not my deſign to enter into a criticiſm upon this author; though to do it effectually, and not ſuperficially, would be the beſt occaſion that any juſt writer could take, to form the judgment and taſte of our nation. For of all Engliſh poets Shakſpeare muſt be confeſſed to be the faireſt and fulleſt ſubject for criticiſm, and to afford the moſt numerous, as well as moſt conſpicuous inſtances, both of beauties and faults of all ſorts. But this far exceeds the bounds of a preface, the buſineſs of which is only to give an account of the ſate of his works, and the diſadvantages under which they have been tranſmitted to us. We ſhall hereby ex-

tenuate many faults which are his, and clear him from the imputation of many which are not: a deſign, which, though it can be no guide to future criticks to do him juſtice in one way, will at leaſt be ſufficient to prevent their doing him an injuſtice in the other.

I cannot however but mention ſome of his principal and characteriſtick excellencies, for which (notwithſtanding his defects) he is juſtly and univerſally elevated above all other dramatick writers. Not that this is the proper place of praiſing him, but becauſe I would not omit any occaſion of doing it.

If ever any author deſerved the name of an *original*, it was Shakſpeare. Homer himſelf drew not his art ſo immediately from the fountains of nature, it proceeded through Ægyptian ſtrainers and channels, and came to him not without ſome tincture of the learning, or ſome caſt of the models, of thoſe before him. The poetry of Shakſpeare was inſpiration indeed: he is not ſo much an imitator, as an inſtrument, of nature; and it is not ſo juſt to ſay that he ſpeaks from her, as that ſhe ſpeaks through him.

His *characters* are ſo much nature herſelf, that it is a ſort of injury to call them by ſo diſtant a name as copies of her. Thoſe of other poets have a conſtant reſemblance, which ſhows that they received them from one another, and were but multipliers of the ſame image: each picture, like a mock-rainbow, is but the reflection of a reflection. But every ſingle character in Shakſpeare is as much an individual, as thoſe in life itſelf: it is as impoſſible to find any two alike; and ſuch as from their relation or affinity in any reſpect appear moſt to be twins, will, upon compariſon, be found remarkably

diſtinct. To this life and variety of character, we muſt add the wonderful preſervation of it; which is ſuch throughout his plays, that had all the ſpeeches been printed without the very names of the perſons, I believe one might have applied them with certainty to every ſpeaker.[1]

The *power* over our *paſsions* was never poſſeſſed in a more eminent degree, or diſplayed in ſo different inſtances. Yet all along, there is ſeen no labour, no pains to raiſe them; no preparation to guide or gueſs to the effect, or be perceived to lead toward it: but the heart ſwells, and the tears burſt out, juſt at the proper places: we are ſurpriſed the moment we weep; and yet upon reflection find the paſſion ſo juſt, that we ſhould be ſurpriſed if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment.

How aſtoniſhing is it again, that the paſſions directly oppoſite to theſe, laughter and ſpleen, are no leſs at his command! that he is not more a maſter of the *great* than of the *ridiculous* in human nature; of our nobleſt tenderneſſes, than of our vaineſt foibles; of our ſtrongeſt emotions, than of our idleſt ſenſations!

Nor does he only excel in the paſſions: in the coolneſs of reflection and reaſoning he is full as admirable. His *ſentiments* are not only in general the moſt pertinent and judicious upon every ſubject; but by a talent very peculiar, ſomething between penetration and felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argu-

[1] Addiſon, in the 273d *Spectator*, has delivered a ſimilar opinion reſpecting Homer: "There is ſcarce a ſpeech or action in the *Iliad*, which the reader may not aſcribe to the perſon who ſpeaks or acts, without ſeeing his name at the head of it."

STEEVENS.

ment turns, or the force of each motive depends. This is perfectly amazing, from a man of no education or experience in thoſe great and publick ſcenes of life which are uſually the ſubject of his thoughts: ſo that he ſeems to have known the world by intuition, to have looked through human nature at one glance, and to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philoſopher, and even the man of the world, may be *born*, as well as the poet.

It muſt be owned, that with all theſe great excellencies, he has almoſt as great defects; and that as he has certainly written better, ſo he has perhaps written worſe, than any other. But I think I can in ſome meaſure account for theſe defects, from ſeveral cauſes and accidents; without which it is hard to imagine that ſo large and ſo enlightened a mind could ever have been ſuſceptible of them. That all theſe contingencies ſhould unite to his diſadvantage ſeems to me almoſt as ſingularly unlucky, as that ſo many various (nay contrary) talents ſhould meet in one man, was happy and extraordinary.

It muſt be allowed that ſtage-poetry, of all other, is more particularly levelled to pleaſe the *populace*, and its ſucceſs more immediately depending upon the *common ſuffrage*. One cannot therefore wonder, if Shakſpeare, having at his firſt appearance no other aim in his writings than to procure a ſubſiſtence, directed his endeavours ſolely to hit the taſte and humour that then prevailed. The audience was generally compoſed of the meaner ſort of people; and therefore the images of life were to be drawn from thoſe of their own rank: accordingly we find, that not our author's only, but almoſt all the old comedies have their ſcene among

tradeſmen and *mechanicks:* and even their hiſtorical plays ſtrictly follow the common *old ſtories* or *vulgar traditions* of that kind of people. In tragedy, nothing was ſo ſure to *ſurprize* and cauſe *admiration,* as the moſt ſtrange, unexpected, and conſequently moſt unnatural, events and incidents; the moſt exaggerated thoughts; the moſt verboſe and bombaſt expreſſion; the moſt pompous rhymes, and thundering verſification. In comedy, nothing was ſo ſure to *pleaſe,* as mean buffoonery, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly jeſts of fools and clowns. Yet even in theſe our author's wit buoys up, and is borne above his ſubject: his genius in thoſe low parts is like ſome prince of a romance in the diſguiſe of a ſhepherd or peaſant; a certain greatneſs and ſpirit now and then break out, which manifeſt his higher extraction and qualities.

It may be added, that not only the common audience had no notion of the rules of writing, but few even of the better ſort piqued themſelves upon any great degree of knowledge or nicety that way; till Ben Jonſon getting poſſeſſion of the ſtage, brought critical learning into vogue: and that this was not done without difficulty, may appear from thoſe frequent leſſons (and indeed almoſt declamations) which he was forced to prefix to his firſt plays, and put into the mouth of his actors, the *grex, chorus,* &c. to remove the prejudices, and inform the judgment of his hearers. Till then, our authors had no thoughts of writing on the model of the ancients: their tragedies were only hiſtories in dialogue; and their comedies followed the thread of any novel as they found it, no leſs implicitly than if it had been true hiſtory.

To judge therefore of Shakſpeare by Ariſtotle's rules, is like trying a man by the laws of one coun-

try, who acted under those of another. He writ to the *people*; and writ at first without patronage from the better sort, and therefore without aims of pleasing them: without assistance or advice from the learned, as without the advantage of education or acquaintance among them; without that knowledge of the best models, the ancients, to inspire him with an emulation of them; in a word, without any views of reputation, and of what poets are pleased to call immortality: some or all of which have encouraged the vanity, or animated the ambition, of other writers.

Yet it must be observed, that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had succeeded to that of the town; the works of his riper years are manifestly raised above those of his former. The dates of his plays sufficiently evidence that his productions improved, in proportion to the respect he had for his auditors. And I make no doubt this observation will be found true in every instance, were but editions extant from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was composed, and whether writ for the town, or the court.

Another cause (and no less strong than the former) may be deduced from our poet's being a *player*, and forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member. They have ever had a standard to themselves, upon other principles than those of Aristotle. As they live by the majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point. Players are just such judges of what is *right*, as

tailors are of what is *graceful*. And in this view it will be but fair to allow, that moſt of our author's faults are leſs to be aſcribed to his wrong judgment as a poet, than to his right judgment as a player.

By theſe men it would be thought a praiſe to Shakſpeare, that he ſcarce ever *blotted a line*. This they induſtriouſly propagated, as appears from what we are told by Ben Jonſon in his *Diſcoveries*, and from the preface of *Heminge* and *Condell* to the firſt folio edition. But in reality (however it has prevailed) there never was a more groundleſs report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, which he entirely new writ; *The Hiſtory of Henry the Sixth*, which was firſt publiſhed under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaſter*; and that of *Henry the Fifth*, extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almoſt as much again as at firſt, and many others. I believe the common opinion of his want of learning proceeded from no better ground. This too might be thought a praiſe by ſome, and to this his errors have as injudiciouſly been aſcribed by others. For 'tis certain, were it true, it would concern but a ſmall part of them; the moſt are ſuch as are not properly defects, but ſuperfœtations: and ariſe not from want of learning or reading, but from want of thinking or judging: or rather (to be more juſt to our author) from a compliance to thoſe wants in others. As to a wrong choice of the ſubject, a wrong conduct of the incidents, falſe thoughts, forced expreſſions, &c. if theſe are not to be aſcribed to the foreſaid accidental reaſons, they muſt be charged upon the poet himſelf, and there is no help for it.

But I think the two diſadvantages which I have mentioned (to be obliged to pleaſe the loweſt of the people, and to keep the worſt of company) if the conſideration be extended as far as it reaſonably may, will appear ſufficient to mislead and depreſs the greateſt genius upon earth. Nay, the more modeſty with which ſuch a one is endued, the more he is in danger of ſubmitting and conforming to others, againſt his own better judgment.

But as to his *want of learning*, it may be neceſſary to ſay ſomething more: there is certainly a vaſt difference between *learning* and *languages*. How far he was ignorant of the latter, I cannot determine; but it is plain he had much reading at leaſt, if they will not call it learning. Nor is it any great matter, if a man has knowledge, whether he has it from one language or from another. Nothing is more evident than that he had a taſte of natural philoſophy, mechanicks, ancient and modern hiſtory, poetical learning, and mythology: we find him very knowing in the cuſtoms, rites, and manners of antiquity. In *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæſar*, not only the ſpirit, but manners, of the Romans are exactly drawn; and ſtill a nicer diſtinction is ſhown between the manners of the Romans in the time of the former, and of the latter. His reading in the ancient hiſtorians is no leſs conſpicuous, in many references to particular paſſages: and the ſpeeches copied from Plutarch in *Coriolanus*[2] may, I think, as well be made an inſtance of his learning, as thoſe copied from Cicero in *Catiline* of Ben Jonſon's. The manners of

[2] Theſe, as the reader will find in the notes on that play, Shakſpeare drew from Sir Thomas North's tranſlation, 1579. MALONE.

other nations in general, the Egyptians, Venetians, French, &c. are drawn with equal propriety. Whatever object of nature, or branch of ſcience, he either ſpeaks of or deſcribes, it is always with competent, if not extenſive knowledge: his deſcriptions are ſtill exact; all his metaphors appropriated, and remarkably drawn from the true nature and inherent qualities of each ſubject. When he treats of ethick or politick, we may conſtantly obſerve a wonderful juſtneſs of diſtinction, as well as extent of comprehenſion. No one is more a maſter of the political ſtory, or has more frequent alluſions to the various parts of it: Mr. Waller (who has been celebrated for this laſt particular) has not ſhown more learning this way than Shakſpeare. We have tranſlations from *Ovid* publiſhed in his name,[3] among thoſe poems which paſs for his, and for ſome of which we have undoubted authority (being publiſhed by himſelf, and dedicated to his noble patron the Earl of Southampton): he appears alſo to have been converſant in *Plautus*, from whom he has taken the plot of one of his plays: he follows the Greek authors, and particularly Dares Phrygius, in another, (although I will not pretend to ſay in what language he read them). The modern Italian writers of *novels* he was manifeſtly acquainted with; and we may conclude him to be no leſs converſant with the ancients of his own country, from the uſe he has made of Chaucer in *Troilus and Creſsida*, and in *The Two Noble Kinſmen*, if that play be his, as there goes a tradition it was (and indeed it has little reſemblance of Fletcher, and more of our author than ſome of thoſe which have been received as genuine).

[3] They were written by Thomas Heywood. See [Mr. Malone's] Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1. MALONE.

I am inclined to think this opinion proceeded originally from the zeal of the partizans of our author and Ben Jonſon; as they endeavoured to exalt the one at the expence of the other. It is ever the nature of parties to be in extremes; and nothing is ſo probable, as that becauſe Ben Jonſon had much the more learning, it was ſaid on the one hand that Shakſpeare had none at all; and becauſe Shakſpeare had much the moſt wit and fancy, it was retorted on the other, that Jonſon wanted both. Becauſe Shakſpeare borrowed nothing, it was ſaid that Ben Jonſon borrowed every thing. Becauſe Jonſon did not write extempore, he was reproached with being a year about every piece; and becauſe Shakſpeare wrote with eaſe and rapidity, they cried, he never once made a blot. Nay, the ſpirit of oppoſition ran ſo high, that whatever thoſe of the one ſide objected to the other, was taken at the rebound, and turned into praiſes; as injudiciouſly, as their antagoniſts before had made them objections.

Poets are always afraid of envy; but ſure they have as much reaſon to be afraid of admiration. They are the Scylla and Charybdis of authors; thoſe who eſcape one, often fall by the other. *Peſsimum genus inimicorum laudantes*, ſays Tacitus; and Virgil deſires to wear a charm againſt thoſe who praiſe a poet without rule or reaſon:

> " ——ſi ultra placitum laudârit, baccare frontem
> " Cingite, ne vati noceat——."

But however this contention might be carried on by the partizans on either ſide, I cannot help thinking theſe two great poets were good friends, and lived on amicable terms, and in offices of ſociety

with each other. It is an acknowledged fact, that Ben Jonſon was introduced upon the ſtage, and his firſt works encouraged, by Shakſpeare. And after his death, that author writes, *To the memory of his beloved William Shakſpeare*, which ſhows as if the friendſhip had continued through life. I cannot for my own part find any thing *invidious* or *ſparing* in thoſe verſes, but wonder Mr. Dryden was of that opinion. He exalts him not only above all his contemporaries, but above Chaucer and Spenſer, whom he will not allow to be great enough to be ranked with him; and challenges the names of Sophocles, Euripides, and Æſchylus, nay, all Greece and Rome at once, to equal him: and (which is very particular) expreſsly vindicates him from the imputation of wanting *art*, not enduring that all his excellencies ſhould be attributed to *nature*. It is remarkable too, that the praiſe he gives him in his *Diſcoveries* ſeems to proceed from a *perſonal kindneſs*; he tells us, that he loved the man, as well as honoured his memory; celebrates the honeſty, openneſs, and frankneſs of his temper; and only diſtinguiſhes, as he reaſonably ought, between the real merit of the author, and the ſilly and derogatory applauſes of the players. Ben Jonſon might indeed be ſparing in his commendations (though certainly he is not ſo in this inſtance) partly from his own nature, and partly from judgment. For men of judgment think they do any man more ſervice in praiſing him juſtly, than laviſhly. I ſay, I would fain believe they were friends, though the violence and ill-breeding of their followers and flatterers were enough to give riſe to the contrary report. I hope that it may be with *parties*, both in wit and ſtate, as with thoſe monſters deſcribed by the poets; and that their *heads* at leaſt may have

ſomething human, though their *bodies* and *tails* are wild beaſts and ſerpents.

As I believe that what I have mentioned gave riſe to the opinion of Shakſpeare's want of learning; ſo what has continued it down to us may have been the many blunders and illiteracies of the firſt publiſhers of his works. In theſe editions their ignorance ſhines in almoſt every page; nothing is more common than *Actus tertia. Exit omnes. Enter three Witches ſolus.*[4] Their French is as bad as their Latin, both in conſtruction and ſpelling: their very Welſh is falſe. Nothing is more likely than that thoſe palpable blunders of Hector's quoting Ariſtotle, with others of that groſs kind, ſprung from the ſame root: it not being at all credible that theſe could be the errors of any man who had the leaſt tincture of a ſchool, or the leaſt converſation with ſuch as had. Ben Jonſon (whom they will not think partial to him) allows him at leaſt to have had *ſome* Latin; which is utterly inconſiſtent with miſtakes like theſe. Nay, the conſtant blunders in proper names of perſons and places, are ſuch as muſt have proceeded from a man, who had not ſo much as read any hiſtory in any language: ſo could not be Shakſpeare's.

I ſhall now lay before the reader ſome of thoſe almoſt innumerable errors, which have riſen from one ſource, the ignorance of the players, both as his actors, and as his editors. When the nature and kinds of theſe are enumerated and conſidered, I dare to ſay that not Shakſpeare only, but Ariſtotle

[4] *Enter three Witches ſolus.*] This blunder appears to be of Mr. Pope's own invention. It is not to be found in any one of the four folio copies of *Macbeth*, and there is no quarto edition of it extant: STEEVENS.

or Cicero, had their works undergone the ſame fate, might have appeared to want ſenſe as well as learning.

It is not certain that any one of his plays was publiſhed by himſelf. During the time of his employment in the theatre, ſeveral of his pieces were printed ſeparately in quarto. What makes me think that moſt of theſe were not publiſhed by him, is the excéſſive careleſsneſs of the preſs: every page is ſo ſcandalouſly falſe ſpelled, and almoſt all the learned and unuſual words ſo intolerably mangled, that it is plain there either was no corrector to the preſs at all, or one totally illiterate. If any were ſuperviſed by himſelf, I ſhould fancy *The Two Parts of Henry the Fourth*, and *Midſummer-Night's Dream*, might have been ſo: becauſe I find no other printed with any exactneſs; and (contrary to the reſt) there is very little variation in all the ſubſequent editions of them. There are extant two prefaces to the firſt quarto edition of *Troilus and Creſsida* in 1609, and to that of *Othello*; by which it appears, that the firſt was publiſhed without his knowledge or conſent, and even before it was acted, ſo late as ſeven or eight years before he died: and that the latter was not printed till after his death. The whole number of genuine plays, which we have been able to find printed in his life-time, amounts but to eleven. And of ſome of theſe, we meet with two or more editions by different printers, each of which has whole heaps of traſh different from the other: which I ſhould fancy was occaſioned by their being taken from different copies belonging to different playhouſes.

The folio edition (in which all the plays we now receive as his were firſt collected) was publiſhed by two players, Heminge and Condell, in 1623,

ſeven years after his deceaſe. They declare, that all the other editions were ſtolen and ſurreptitious, and affirm theirs to be purged from the errors of the former. This is true as to the literal errors, and no other; for in all reſpects elſe it is far worſe than the quartos.

Firſt, becauſe the additions of trifling and bombaſt paſſages are in this edition far more numerous. For whatever had been added, ſince thoſe quartos, by the actors, or had ſtolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all ſtand charged upon the author. He himſelf complained of this uſage in *Hamlet*, where he wiſhes that *thoſe who play the clowns would ſpeak no more than is ſet down for them.* (Act III. ſc. ii.) But as a proof that he could not eſcape it, in the old editions of *Romeo and Juliet* there is no hint of a great number of the mean conceits and ribaldries now to be found there. In others, the low ſcenes of mobs, plebeians, and clowns, are vaſtly ſhorter than at preſent: and I have ſeen one in particular (which ſeems to have belonged to the play-houſe, by having the parts divided with lines, and the actors names in the margin) where ſeveral of thoſe very paſſages were added in a written hand, which are ſince to be found in the folio.

In the next place, a number of beautiful paſſages, which are extant in the firſt ſingle editions, are omitted in this: as it ſeems, without any other reaſon, than their willingneſs to ſhorten ſome ſcenes: theſe men (as it was ſaid of Procruſtes) either lopping, or ſtretching an author, to make him juſt fit for their ſtage.

This edition is ſaid to be printed from the *original copies*; I believe they meant thoſe which had

lain ever ſince the author's days in the play-houſe, and had from time to time been cut, or added to, arbitrarily. It appears that this edition, as well as the quartos, was printed (at leaſt partly) from no better copies than the *prompter's book*, or *piece-meal parts* written out for the uſe of the actors: for in ſome places their very [5] names are through careleſsneſs ſet down inſtead of the *Perſonæ Dramatis*; and in others the notes of direction to the *property-men* for their *moveables*, and to the *players* for their *entries*, are inſerted into the text [6] through the ignorance of the tranſcribers.

The plays not having been before ſo much as diſtinguiſhed by *Acts* and *Scenes*, they are in this edition divided according as they played them; often when there is no pauſe in the action, or where they thought fit to make a breach in it, for the ſake of muſick, maſques, or monſters.

Sometimes the ſcenes are tranſpoſed and ſhuffled backward and forward; a thing which could no otherwiſe happen, but by their being taken from ſeparate and piece-meal written parts.

Many verſes are omitted entirely, and others tranſpoſed; from whence invincible obſcurities have ariſen, paſt the gueſs of any commentator to clear up, but juſt where the accidental glimpſe of an old edition enlightens us.

[5] *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act II: "*Enter Prince Leonato, Claudio, and Jack Wilſon*," inſtead of *Balthaſar*. And in Act IV. *Cowley* and *Kemp* conſtantly through a whole ſcene. Edit. fol. of 1623, and 1632. POPE.

[6] Such as

"My queen is murder'd! *Ring the little bell.*"

"—His noſe grew as ſharp as a pen, *and a table of green fields*;" which laſt words are not in the quarto. POPE.

There is no ſuch line in any play of Shakſpeare, as that quoted above by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

Some characters were confounded and mixed, or two put into one, for want of a competent number of actors. Thus in the quarto edition of *Midſummer-Night's Dream*, Act V. Shakſpeare introduces a kind of maſter of the revels called *Philoſtrate*; all whoſe part is given to another character (that of *Egeus*) in the ſubſequent editions: ſo alſo in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. This too makes it probable that the prompter's books were what they called the original copies.

From liberties of this kind, many ſpeeches alſo were put into the mouths of wrong perſons, where the author now ſeems chargeable with making them ſpeak out of character: or ſometimes perhaps for no better reaſon, than that a governing player, to have the mouthing of ſome favourite ſpeech himſelf, would ſnatch it from the unworthy lips of an underling.

Proſe from verſe they did not know, and they accordingly printed one for the other throughout the volume.

Having been forced to ſay ſo much of the players, I think I ought in juſtice to remark, that the judgment, as well as condition of that claſs of people was then far inferior to what it is in our days. As then the beſt play-houſes were inns and taverns, (the Globe, the Hope, the Red Bull, the Fortune, &c.) ſo the top of the profeſſion were then mere players, not gentlemen of the ſtage: they were led into the buttery by the ſteward;[7] not placed at the lord's

[7] Mr. Pope probably recollected the following lines in *The Taming of the Shrew*, ſpoken by a Lord, who is giving directions to his ſervant concerning ſome players:

"Go, ſirrah, take them to the *buttery*,
"And give them friendly welcome, every one."

But he ſeems not to have obſerved that the players here introduced were *ſtrollers*; and there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that

table, or lady's toilette: and conſequently were entirely deprived of thoſe advantages they now enjoy in the familiar converſation of our nobility, and an intimacy (not to ſay dearneſs) with people of the firſt condition.

From what has been ſaid, there can be no queſtion but had Shakſpeare publiſhed his works himſelf (eſpecially in his latter time, and after his retreat from the ſtage) we ſhould not only be certain which are genuine, but ſhould find in thoſe that are, the errors leſſened by ſome thouſands. If I may judge from all the diſtinguiſhing marks of his ſtyle, and his manner of thinking and writing, I make no doubt to declare that thoſe wretched plays, *Pericles*, *Locrine*, *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, *Yorkſhire Tragedy*, *Lord Cromwell*, *The Puritan*, *London Prodigal*, and a thing called *The Double Falſhood*,[7] cannot be admitted as his. And I ſhould conjecture of ſome of the others, (particularly *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Titus Andronicus*,) that only ſome characters, ſingle ſcenes, or perhaps a few particular paſſages, were of his hand. It is very probable what occaſioned ſome plays to be ſuppoſed Shakſpeare's, was only this; that they were pieces produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the theatre while it was under his adminiſtration; and no owner claiming them, they were adjudged to him, as they give ſtrays to the lord of the manor: a miſtake which (one may alſo obſerve) it was not for the intereſt of the houſe to remove. Yet the players them-

our author, Heminge, Burbage, Lowin, &c. who were licenſed by King James, were treated in this manner. MALONE.

[7] *The Double Falſhood*, or *The Diſtreſſed Lovers*, a play, acted at Drury Lane, 8vo. 1727. This piece was produced by Mr. Theobald as a performance of Shakſpeare's. See Dr. Farmer's *Eſſay on the Learning of Shakſpeare*, Vol. II. REED.

ſelves, Heminge and Condell, afterwards did Shakſpeare the juſtice to reject thoſe eight plays in their edition; though they were then printed in his name,[8] in every body's hands, and acted with ſome applauſe (as we learned from what Ben Jonſon ſays of *Pericles* in his ode on the *New Inn*). That *Titus Andronicus* is one of this claſs I am the rather induced to believe, by finding the ſame author openly expreſs his contempt of it in the *Induction* to *Bartholomew Fair*, in the year 1614, when Shakſpeare was yet living. And there is no better authority for theſe latter ſort, than for the former, which were equally publiſhed in his life-time.

If we give into this opinion, how many low and vicious parts and paſſages might no longer reflect upon this great genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him? And even in thoſe which are really his, how many faults may have been unjuſtly laid to his account from arbitrary additions, expunctions, tranſpoſitions of ſcenes and lines, confuſion of characters and perſons, wrong application of ſpeeches, corruptions of innumerable paſſages by the ignorance, and wrong corrections of them again by the impertinence of his firſt editors? From one or other of theſe conſiderations, I am verily perſuaded, that the greateſt and the groſſeſt part of what are thought his errors would vaniſh, and leave his character in a light very different from that diſadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us.

This is the ſtate in which Shakſpeare's writings lie at preſent; for ſince the above-mentioned folio edition, all the reſt have implicitly followed it,

[8] His name was affixed only to four of them. MALONE.

without having recourſe to any of the former, or ever making the compariſon between them. It is impoſſible to repair the injuries already done him; too much time has elapſed, and the materials are too few. In what I have done I have rather given a proof of my willingneſs and deſire, than of my ability, to do him juſtice. I have diſcharged the dull duty of an editor, to my beſt judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks, with a religious abhorrence of all innovation, and without any indulgence to my private ſenſe or conjecture. The method taken in this edition will ſhow itſelf. The various readings are fairly put in the margin, ſo that every one may compare them; and thoſe I have preferred into the text are conſtantly *ex fide codicum*, upon authority. The alterations or additions, which Shakſpeare himſelf made, are taken notice of as they occur. Some ſuſpected paſſages, which are exceſſively bad (and which ſeem interpolations by being ſo inſerted that one can entirely omit them without any chaſm, or deficience in the context) are degraded to the bottom of the page; with an aſteriſk referring to the places of their inſertion. The ſcenes are marked ſo diſtinctly, that every removal of place is ſpecified; which is more neceſſary in this author than any other, ſince he ſhifts them more frequently; and ſometimes, without attending to this particular, the reader would have met with obſcurities. The more obſolete or unuſual words are explained. Some of the moſt ſhining paſſages are diſtinguiſhed by commas in the margin; and where the beauty lay not in particulars, but in the whole, a ſtar is prefixed to the ſcene. This ſeems to me a ſhorter and leſs oſtentatious method of performing the better half of criticiſm (namely, the pointing out

an author's excellencies) than to fill a whole paper with citations of fine paſſages, with *general applauſes*, or *empty exclamations* at the tail of them. There is alſo ſubjoined a catalogue of thoſe firſt editions, by which the greater part of the various readings and of the corrected paſſages are authorized; moſt of which are ſuch as carry their own evidence along with them. Theſe editions now hold the place of originals, and are the only materials left to repair the deficiencies or reſtore the corrupted ſenſe of the author: I can only wiſh that a greater number of them (if a greater were ever publiſhed) may yet be found, by a ſearch more ſucceſsful than mine, for the better accompliſhment of this end.

I will conclude by ſaying of Shakſpeare, that with all his faults, and with all the irregularity of his *drama*, one may look upon his works, in compariſon of thoſe that are more finiſhed and regular, as upon an ancient majeſtick piece of *Gothick* architecture, compared with a neat modern building: the latter is more elegant and glaring, but the former is more ſtrong and more ſolemn. It muſt be allowed that in one of theſe there are materials enough to make many of the other. It has much the greater variety, and much the nobler apartments; though we are often conducted to them by dark, odd, and uncouth paſſages. Nor does the whole fail to ſtrike us with greater reverence, though many of the parts are childiſh, ill-placed, and unequal to its grandeur.[9]

[9] The following paſſage by Mr. Pope ſtands as a preface to the *various readings* at the end of the 8th volume of his edition of Shakſpeare, 1728. For the notice of it I am indebted to Mr. Chalmers's *Supplemental Apology*, p. 261. REED.

"Since the publication of *our* firſt edition, there having been

MR. THEOBALD'S

PREFACE.[1]

THE attempt to write upon SHAKSPEARE is like going into a large, a ſpacious, and a ſplendid dome, through the conveyance of a narrow and obſcure entry. A glare of light ſuddenly breaks upon you beyond what the avenue at firſt promiſed; and a thouſand beauties of genius and character,

ſome attempts upon Shakſpeare publiſhed by Lewis Theobald, (which he would not communicate during the time wherein that edition was preparing for the preſs, when *we*, by publick advertiſements, did requeſt the aſſiſtance of all lovers of this author,) *we* have inſerted, in this impreſſion, as many of 'em as are judg'd of any the leaſt advantage to the poet; the whole amounting to about *twenty-five* words.

"But to the end every reader may judge for himſelf, we have annexed a *compleat liſt* of the reſt; which if he ſhall think *trivial*, or *erroneous*, either in part, or in whole; at worſt it can ſpoil but a half ſheet of paper, that chances to be left vacant here. And we purpoſe for the future, to do the ſame with reſpect to any other perſons, who either thro' *candor* or *vanity*, ſhall communicate or publiſh, the leaſt things tending to the illuſtration of our author. *We* have here omitted nothing but *pointings* and meer errors of the preſs, which I hope the corrector of it has rectify'd; if not, I cou'd wiſh as accurate an one as Mr. Th. [if he] had been at that trouble, which I deſired Mr. Tonſon to ſolicit him to undertake. A. P."

[1] This is Mr. Theobald's preface to his ſecond edition in 1740, and was much curtailed by himſelf after it had been prefixed to the impreſſion in 1733. STEEVENS.

like ſo many gaudy apartments pouring at once upon the eye, diffuſe and throw themſelves out to the mind. The proſpect is too wide to come within the compaſs of a ſingle view: it is a gay confuſion of pleaſing objects, too various to be enjoyed but in a general admiration; and they muſt be ſeparated and eyed diſtinctly, in order to give the proper entertainment.

And as, in great piles of building, ſome parts are often finiſhed up to hit the taſte of the *connoiſſeur*; others more negligently put together, to ſtrike the fancy of a common and unlearned beholder; ſome parts are made ſtupendouſly magnificent and grand, to ſurpriſe with the vaſt deſign and execution of the architect; others are contracted, to amuſe you with his neatneſs and elegance in little; ſo, in Shakſpeare, we may find *traits* that will ſtand the teſt of the ſevereſt judgment; and ſtrokes as careleſsly hit off, to the level of the more ordinary capacities; ſome deſcriptions raiſed to that pitch of grandeur, as to aſtoniſh you with the compaſs and elevation of his thought; and others copying nature within ſo narrow, ſo confined a circle, as if the author's talent lay only at drawing in miniature.

In how many points of light muſt we be obliged to gaze at this great poet! In how many branches of excellence to conſider and admire him! Whether we view him on the ſide of art or nature, he ought equally to engage our attention: whether we reſpect the force and greatneſs of his genius, the extent of his knowledge and reading, the power and addreſs with which he throws out and applies either nature or learning, there is ample ſcope both for our wonder and pleaſure. If his diction, and the clothing of his thoughts attract us, how much

more muſt we be charmed with the richneſs and variety of his images and ideas! If his images and ideas ſteal into our ſouls, and ſtrike upon our fancy, how much are they improved in price when we come to reflect with what propriety and juſtneſs they are applied to character! If we look into his characters, and how they are furniſhed and proportioned to the employment he cuts out for them, how are we taken up with the maſtery of his portraits! What draughts of nature! What variety of originals, and how differing each from the other! How are they dreſſed from the ſtores of his own luxurious imagination; without being the apes of mode, or borrowing from any foreign wardrobe! Each of them are the ſtandards of faſhion for themſelves: like gentlemen that are above the direction of their tailors, and can adorn themſelves without the aid of imitation. If other poets draw more than one fool or coxcomb, there is the ſame reſemblance in them, as in that painter's draughts who was happy only at forming a roſe; you find them all younger brothers of the ſame family, and all of them have a pretence to give the ſame creſt: but Shakſpeare's clowns and fops come all of a different houſe; they are no farther allied to one another than as man to man, members of the ſame ſpecies; but as different in features and lineaments of character, as we are from one another in face or complexion. But I am unawares launching into his character as a writer, before I have ſaid what I intended of him as a private member of the republick.

Mr. Rowe has very juſtly obſerved, that people are fond of diſcovering any little perſonal ſtory of the great men of antiquity; and that the common accidents of their lives naturally become the ſub-

ject of our critical enquiries: that however trifling ſuch a curioſity at the firſt view may appear, yet, as for what relates to men of letters, the knowledge of an author may, perhaps, ſometimes conduce to the better underſtanding his works; and, indeed, this author's works, from the bad treatment he has met with from copyiſts and editors, have ſo long wanted a comment, that one would zealouſly embrace every method of information that could contribute to recover them from the injuries with which they have ſo long lain overwhelmed.

'Tis certain, that if we have firſt admired the man in his writings, his caſe is ſo circumſtanced, that we muſt naturally admire the writings in the man: that if we go back to take a view of his education, and the employment in life which fortune had cut out for him, we ſhall retain the ſtronger ideas of his extenſive genius.

His father, we are told, was a conſiderable dealer in wool; but having no fewer than ten children, of whom our Shakſpeare was the eldeſt, the beſt education he could afford him was no better than to qualify him for his own buſineſs and employment. I cannot affirm with any certainty how long his father lived; but I take him to be the ſame Mr. John Shakſpeare who was living in the year 1599, and who then, in honour of his ſon, took out an extract of his family arms from the herald's office; by which it appears, that he had been officer and bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickſhire; and that he enjoyed ſome hereditary lands and tenements, the reward of his great grandfather's faithful and approved ſervice to King Henry VII.

Be this as it will, our Shakſpeare, it ſeems, was

bred for ſome time at a free-ſchool; the very free-ſchool, I preſume, founded at Stratford: where, we are told, he acquired what Latin he was maſter of: but that his father being obliged, through narrowneſs of circumſtances, to withdraw him too ſoon from thence, he was thereby unhappily prevented from making any proficiency in the dead languages; a point that will deſerve ſome little diſcuſſion in the ſequel of this diſſertation.

How long he continued in his father's way of buſineſs, either as an aſſiſtant to him, or on his own proper account, no notices are left to inform us: nor have I been able to learn preciſely at what period of life he quitted his native Stratford, and began his acquaintance with London and the *ſtage*.

In order to ſettle in the world after a family-manner, he thought fit, Mr. Rowe acquaints us, to marry while he was yet very young. It is certain he did ſo: for by the monument in Stratford church, erected to the memory of his daughter Suſanna, the wife of John Hall, gentleman, it appears, that ſhe died on the 2d of July, in the year 1649, aged 66. So that ſhe was born in 1583, when her father could not be full 19 years old; who was himſelf born in the year 1564. Nor was ſhe his eldeſt child, for he had another daughter, Judith, who was born before her,[a] and who was married to one Mr. Thomas Quiney. So that Shakſpeare muſt have entered into wedlock by that time he was turned of ſeventeen years.

Whether the force of inclination merely, or ſome concurring circumſtances of convenience in the match, prompted him to marry ſo early, is not

[a] See the extracts from the regiſter-book of the pariſh of Stratford, in a preceding page. STEEVENS.

eaſy to be determined at this diſtance; but, it is probable, a view of intereſt might partly ſway his conduct in this point: for he married the daughter of one Hathaway, a ſubſtantial yeoman in his neighbourhood, and ſhe had the ſtart of him in age no leſs than eight years. She ſurvived him notwithſtanding ſeven ſeaſons, and died that very year the *players* publiſhed the firſt edition of his works in *folio*, anno Dom. 1623, at the age of 67 years, as we likewiſe learn from her monument in Stratford church.

How long he continued in this kind of ſettlement, upon his own native ſpot, is not more eaſily to be determined. But if the tradition be true, of that extravagance which forced him both to quit his country and way of living, to wit, his being engaged with a knot of young deer ſtealers, to rob the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Cherlecot, near Stratford, the enterprize ſavours ſo much of youth and levity, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe it was before he could write full man. Beſides, conſidering he has left us ſix-and-thirty plays at leaſt, avowed to be genuine; and conſidering too that he had retired from the ſtage, to ſpend the latter part of his days at his own native Stratford; the interval of time neceſſarily required for the finiſhing ſo many dramatick pieces, obliges us to ſuppoſe he threw himſelf very early upon the play-houſe. And as he could, probably, contract no acquaintance with the drama, while he was driving on the affair of wool at home; ſome time muſt be loſt, even after he had commenced player, before he could attain knowledge enough in the ſcience to qualify himſelf for turning author.

It has been obſerved by Mr. Rowe, that amongſt other extravagancies, which our author has given

to his Sir John Falſtaff in *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, he has made him a deer-ſtealer; and, that he might at the ſame time remember his Warwickſhire proſecutor, under the name of Juſtice Shallow, he has given him very near the ſame coat of arms, which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, deſcribes for a family there. There are two coats, I obſerve, in Dugdale, where three ſilver fiſhes are borne in the name of Lucy; and another coat, to the monument of Thomas Lucy, ſon of Sir William Lucy, in which are quartered, in four ſeveral diviſions, twelve little fiſhes, three in each diviſion, probably *Luces*. This very coat, indeed, ſeems alluded to in Shallow's giving the *dozen* white *Luces*, and in Slender ſaying *he may quarter*. When I conſider the exceeding candour and good-nature of our author (which inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the moſt delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him): and that he ſhould throw this humorous piece of ſatire at his proſecutor, at leaſt twenty years after the provocation given; I am confidently perſuaded it muſt be owing to an unforgiving rancour on the proſecutor's ſide: and, if this was the caſe, it were pity but the diſgrace of ſuch an inveteracy ſhould remain as a laſting reproach, and Shallow ſtand as a mark of ridicule to ſtigmatize his malice.

It is ſaid, our author ſpent ſome years before his death in eaſe, retirement, and the converſation of his friends, at his native Stratford. I could never pick up any certain intelligence, when he relinquiſhed the ſtage. I know, it has been miſtakenly thought by ſome, that Spenſer's *Thalia*, in his *Tears of the Muſes*, where ſhe laments the loſs of

her Willy in the comick ſcene, has been applied to our author's quitting the ſtage. But Spenſer himſelf, it is well known, quitted the ſtage of life in the year 1598; and, five years after this, we find Shakſpeare's name among the actors in Ben Jonſon's *Sejanus*, which firſt made its appearance in the year 1603. Nor ſurely, could he then have any thoughts of retiring, ſince that very year a licence under the privy-ſeal was granted by King James I. to him and Fletcher, Burbage, Phillippes, Hemings, Condell, &c. authorizing them to exerciſe the art of playing comedies, tragedies, &c. as well at their uſual houſe called *The Globe* on the other ſide of the water, as in any other parts of the kingdom, during his majeſty's pleaſure (a copy of which licence is preſerved in Rymer's *Fœdera*). Again, it is certain, that Shakſpeare did not exhibit his *Macbeth* till after the Union was brought about, and till after King James I. had begun to touch for the *evil:* for it is plain, he has inſerted compliments on both thoſe accounts, upon his royal maſter in that tragedy. Nor, indeed, could the number of the dramatick pieces, he produced, admit of his retiring near ſo early as that period. So that what Spenſer there ſays, if it relate at all to Shakſpeare, muſt hint at ſome occaſional receſs he made for a time upon a diſguſt taken: or the Willy, there mentioned, muſt relate to ſome other favourite poet. I believe, we may ſafely determine, that he had not quitted in the year 1610. For, in his *Tempeſt*, our author makes mention of the Bermuda iſlands, which were unknown to the Engliſh, till, in 1609, Sir John Summers made a voyage to North-America, and diſcovered them, and afterwards invited ſome of his countrymen to ſettle a plantation there. That he

became the private gentleman at leaſt three years before his deceaſe, is pretty obvious from another circumſtance: I mean, from that remarkable and well-known ſtory, which Mr. Rowe has given us of our author's intimacy with Mr. John Combe, an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and uſury; and upon whom Shakſpeare made the following facetious epitaph:

" Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd,
" 'Tis a hundred to ten his ſoul is not ſav'd;
" If any man aſk, who lies in this tomb,
" Oh! oh! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Comb.

This ſarcaſtical piece of wit was, at the gentleman's own requeſt, thrown out extemporally in his company. And this Mr. John Combe I take to be the ſame, who, by Dugdale in his *Antiquities of Warwickſhire*, is ſaid to have died in the year 1614,[3] and for whom, at the upper end of the quire of the Guild of the Holy Croſs at Stratford, a fair monument is erected, having a ſtatue thereon cut in alabaſter, and in a gown, with this epitaph: "Here lieth interred the body of John Combe, eſq; who died the 10th of July, 1614, who bequeathed ſeveral annual charities to the pariſh of Stratford, and 100l. to be lent to fifteen poor tradeſmen from three years to three years, changing the parties every third year, at the rate of fifty ſhillings *per annum*, the increaſe to be diſtributed to the almes-poor there."—The donation has all the air of a rich and ſagacious uſurer.

Shakſpeare himſelf did not ſurvive Mr. Combe

[3] By Mr. Combe's Will, which is now in the Prerogative-office in London, Shakſpeare had a legacy of five pounds bequeathed to him. The Will is without any date. REED.

long, for he died in the year 1616, the 53d of his age. He lies buried on the north ſide of the chancel in the great church at Stratford; where a monument, decent enough for the time, is erected to him, and placed againſt the wall. He is repreſented under an arch in a ſitting poſture, a cuſhion ſpread before him, with a pen in his right hand, and his left reſted on a ſcrowl of paper. The Latin diſtich, which is placed under the cuſhion, has been given us by Mr. Pope, or his graver, in this manner:

"INGENIO Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
"Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet."

I confeſs, I do not conceive the difference between *ingenio* and *genio* in the firſt verſe. They ſeem to me intirely ſynonymous terms; nor was the Pylian ſage Neſtor celebrated for his ingenuity, but for an experience and judgment owing to his long age. Dugdale, in his *Antiquities of Warwickſhire*, has copied this diſtich with a diſtinction which Mr. Rowe has followed, and which certainly reſtores us the true meaning of the epitaph:

"JUDICIO Pylium, genio Socratem," &c.

In 1614, the greater part of the town of Stratford was conſumed by fire; but our Shakſpeare's houſe, among ſome others, eſcaped the flames. This houſe was firſt built by Sir Hugh Clopton, a younger brother of an ancient family in that neighbourhood, who took their name from the manor of Clopton. Sir Hugh was Sheriff of London in the reign of Richard III. and Lord-Mayor in the reign of King Henry VII. To this gentle-

man the town of Stratford is indebted for the fine ſtone bridge, conſiſting of fourteen arches; which, at an extraordinary expence, he built over the Avon, together with a cauſeway running at the weſt-end thereof; as alſo for rebuilding the chapel adjoining to his houſe, and the croſs-aiſle in the church there. It is remarkable of him, that though he lived and died a bachelor, among the other extenſive charities which he left both to the city of London and town of Stratford, he bequeathed conſiderable legacies for the marriage of poor maidens of good name and fame both in London and at Stratford. Notwithſtanding which large donations in his life, and bequeſts at his death, as he had purchaſed the manor of Clopton, and all the eſtate of the family; ſo he left the ſame again to his elder brother's ſon with a very great addition: (a proof how well beneficence and œconomy may walk hand in hand in wiſe families): good part of which eſtate is yet in the poſſeſſion of Edward Clopton, Eſq and Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. lineally deſcended from the elder brother of the firſt Sir Hugh, who particularly bequeathed to his nephew, by his will, his houſe, by the name of his *Great Houſe* in Stratford.

The eſtate had now been ſold out of the Clopton family for above a century, at the time when Shakſpeare became the purchaſer; who, having repaired and modelled it to his own mind, changed the name to *New-Place*, which the manſion-houſe, ſince erected upon the ſame ſpot, at this day retains. The houſe and lands, which attended it, continued in Shakſpeare's deſcendants to the time of the *Reſtoration*; when they were re-purchaſed by the Clopton family, and the manſion now belongs to Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. To the favour of this

worthy gentleman I owe the knowledge of one particular, in honour of our poet's once dwelling-houſe, of which, I preſume, Mr. Rowe never was apprized. When the civil war raged in England, and King Charles the Firſt's queen was driven by the neceſſity of affairs to make a receſs in Warwickſhire, ſhe kept her court for three weeks in New-Place. We may reaſonably ſuppoſe it then the beſt private houſe in the town; and her majeſty preferred it to the college, which was in the poſſeſſion of the Combe family, who did not ſo ſtrongly favour the king's party.

How much our author employed himſelf in poetry, after his retirement from the ſtage, does not ſo evidently appear: very few poſthumous ſketches of his pen have been recovered to aſcertain that point. We have been told, indeed, in print,[4] but not till very lately, that two large cheſts full of this great man's looſe papers and manuſcripts, in the hands of an ignorant baker of Warwick, (who married one of the deſcendants from our Shakſpeare,) were careleſsly ſcattered and thrown about as garret lumber and litter, to the particular knowledge of the late Sir William Biſhop, till they were all conſumed in the general fire and deſtruction of that town. I cannot help being a little apt to diſtruſt the authority of this tradition, becauſe his wife ſurvived him ſeven years; and, as his favourite daughter Suſanna ſurvived her twenty-ſix years, it is very improbable they ſhould ſuffer ſuch a treaſure to be removed, and tranſlated into a remoter branch of the family, without a ſcrutiny firſt made into the value of it.

[4] See an anſwer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakſpeare, by a Strolling Player, 8vo. 1729, p. 45. REED.

This, I ſay, inclines me to diſtruſt the authority of the relation: but notwithſtanding ſuch an apparent improbability, if we really loſt ſuch a treaſure, by whatever fatality or caprice of fortune they came into ſuch ignorant and neglected hands, I agree with the *relater*, the misfortune is wholly irreparable.

To theſe particulars, which regard his perſon and private life, ſome few more are to be gleaned from Mr. Rowe's *Account of his Life and Writings:* let us now take a ſhort view of him in his publick capacity as a *writer:* and, from thence, the tranſition will be eaſy to the *ſtate* in which his *writings* have been handed down to us.

No age, perhaps, can produce an author more various from himſelf, than Shakſpeare has been univerſally acknowledged to be. The diverſity in ſtyle, and other parts of compoſition, ſo obvious in him, is as variouſly to be accounted for. His education, we find, was at beſt but begun: and he ſtarted early into a ſcience from the force of genius, unequally aſſiſted by acquired improvements. His fire, ſpirit, and exuberance of imagination, gave an impetuoſity to his pen: his ideas flowed from him in a ſtream rapid, but not turbulent; copious, but not ever overbearing its ſhores. The eaſe and ſweetneſs of his temper might not a little contribute to his facility in writing; as his employment as a *player*, gave him an advantage and habit of fancying himſelf the very character he meant to delineate. He uſed the helps of his function in forming himſelf to create and expreſs that *ſublime*, which other actors can only copy, and throw out, in action and graceful attitude. But, *Nullum ſine venia placuit ingenium*, ſays Seneca. The genius, that gives us the greateſt pleaſure, ſometimes ſtands in

need of our indulgence. Whenever this happens with regard to Shakſpeare, I would willingly impute it to a vice of *his times*. We ſee complaiſance enough, in our days, paid to a *bad taſte*. So that his *clinches, falſe wit*, and deſcending beneath himſelf, may have proceeded from a deference paid to the then *reigning barbariſm*.

I have not thought it out of my province, whenever occaſion offered, to take notice of ſome of our poet's grand touches of nature, ſome, that do not appear ſufficiently ſuch, but in which he ſeems the moſt deeply inſtructed; and to which, no doubt, he has ſo much owed that happy preſervation of his *characters*, for which he is juſtly celebrated. Great geniuſes, like his, naturally unambitious, are ſatisfied to conceal their arts in theſe points. It is the foible of your worſer poets to make a parade and oſtentation of that little ſcience they have; and to throw it out in the moſt ambitious colours. And whenever a writer of this claſs ſhall attempt to copy theſe artful concealments of our author, and ſhall either think them eaſy, or practiſed by a writer for his eaſe, he will ſoon be convinced of his miſtake by the difficulty of reaching the imitation of them.

> " Speret idem, ſudet multùm, fruſtráque laboret,
> " Auſus idem :————"

Indeed to point out and exclaim upon all the beauties of Shakſpeare, as they come ſingly in review, would be as inſipid, as endleſs; as tedious, as unneceſſary: but the explanation of thoſe beauties that are leſs obvious to common readers, and whoſe illuſtration depends on the rules of juſt criticiſm, and an exact knowledge of human life,

ſhould deſervedly have a ſhare in a general critique upon the author. But to paſs over at once to another ſubject:——

It has been allowed on all hands, how far our author was indebted to *nature*; it is not ſo well agreed, how much he owed to *languages* and acquired *learning*.[5] The deciſions on this ſubject were certainly ſet on foot by the hint from Ben Jonſon, that he had ſmall Latin, and leſs Greek: and from this tradition, as it were, Mr. Rowe has thought fit peremptorily to declare, that, "It is without controverſy, he had no knowledge of the writings of the ancient poets, for that in his works we find no traces of any thing which looks like an imitation of the ancients. For the delicacy of his taſte (continues he) and the natural bent of his own great genius (equal, if not ſuperior, to ſome of the beſt of theirs,) would certainly have led him

[5] *It has been allowed* &c.] On this ſubject an eminent writer has given his opinion which ſhould not be ſuppreſſed. "You will aſk me, perhaps, now I am on this ſubject, how it happened that Shakſpeare's language is every where ſo much his own as to ſecure his imitations, if they were ſuch, from diſcovery; when I pronounce with ſuch aſſurance of thoſe of our other poets. The anſwer is given for me in the preface to Mr. Theobald's Shakſpeare; though the obſervation, I think, is too good to come from that critick. It is, that though his words, agreeably to the ſtate of the Engliſh tongue at that time, be generally Latin, his phraſeology is perfectly Engliſh: an advantage he owed to his ſlender acquaintance with the Latin idiom. Whereas the other writers of his age and ſuch others of an older date as were likely to fall into his hands, had not only the moſt familiar acquaintance with the Latin idiom, but affected on all occaſions to make uſe of it. Hence it comes to paſs, that though he might draw ſometimes from the Latin (Ben Jonſon you know tells us *He had leſs Greek*) and the learned Engliſh writers, he takes nothing but the ſentiments; the expreſſion comes of itſelf and is purely Engliſh." *Biſhop's Hurd's Letter to Mr. Maſon, on the Marks of Imitation*, 8vo. 1758. REED.

to read and ſtudy them with ſo much pleaſure, that ſome of their fine images would naturally have inſinuated themſelves into, and been mixed with, his own writings: and ſo his not copying, at leaſt ſomething from them, may be an argument of his never having read them." I ſhall leave it to the determination of my learned readers, from the numerous paſſages which I have occaſionally quoted in my notes, in which our poet ſeems cloſely to have imitated the claſſicks, whether Mr. Rowe's aſſertion be ſo abſolutely to be depended on. The reſult of the controverſy muſt certainly, either way, terminate to our author's honour: how happily he could imitate them, if that point be allowed; or how glorioufly he could think like them, without owing any thing to imitation.

Though I ſhould be very unwilling to allow Shakſpeare ſo poor a ſcholar, as many have laboured to repreſent him, yet I ſhall be very cautious of declaring too poſitively on the other ſide of the queſtion; that is, with regard to my opinion of his knowledge in the dead languages. And therefore the paſſages, that I occaſionally quote from the claſſicks, ſhall not be urged as proofs that he knowingly imitated thoſe originals; but brought to ſhow how happily he has expreſſed himſelf upon the ſame topicks. A very learned critick of our own nation has declared, that a ſameneſs of thought and ſameneſs of expreſſion too, in two writers of a different age, can hardly happen, without a violent ſuſpicion of the latter copying from his predeceſſor. I ſhall not therefore run any great riſque of a cenſure, though I ſhould venture to hint, that the reſemblances in thought and expreſſion of our author and an ancient (which we ſhould allow to be imitation in the one whoſe learning was not queſ-

tioned) may ſometimes take its riſe from ſtrength of memory, and thoſe impreſſions which he owed to the ſchool. And if we may allow a poſſibility of this, conſidering that, when he quitted the ſchool, he gave into his father's profeſſion and way of living, and had, it is likely, but a ſlender library of claſſical learning; and conſidering what a number of tranſlations, romances, and legends, ſtarted about his time, and a little before (moſt of which, it is very evident, he read); I think it may eaſily be reconciled why he rather ſchemed his *plots* and *characters* from theſe more latter informations, than went back to thoſe fountains, for which he might entertain a ſincere veneration, but to which he could not have ſo ready a recourſe.

In touching on another part of his learning, as it related to the knowledge of *hiſtory* and *books*, I ſhall advance ſomething that, at firſt ſight, will very much wear the appearance of a paradox. For I ſhall find it no hard matter to prove, that, from, the groſſeſt blunders in hiſtory, we are not to infer his real ignorance of it; nor from a greater uſe of Latin words, than ever any other Engliſh author uſed, muſt we infer his intimate acquaintance with that language.

A reader of taſte may eaſily obſerve, that though Shakſpeare, almoſt in every ſcene of his hiſtorical plays, commits the groſſeſt offences againſt chronology, hiſtory, and ancient politicks; yet this was not through ignorance, as is generally ſuppoſed, but through the too powerful blaze of his imagination, which, when once raiſed, made all acquired knowledge vaniſh and diſappear before it. But this licence in him, as I have ſaid, muſt not be imputed to ignorance, ſince as often we may find him, when occaſion ſerves, reaſoning up to the

truth of hiſtory; and throwing out ſentiments as juſtly adapted to the circumſtances, of his ſubject, as to the dignity of his characters, or dictates of nature in general.

Then to come to his knowledge of the Latin tongue, it is certain, there is a ſurprizing effuſion of Latin words made Engliſh, far more than in any one Engliſh author I have ſeen; but we muſt be cautious to imagine, this was of his own doing. For the Engliſh tongue, in this age, began extremely to ſuffer by an inundation of Latin: and this, to be ſure, was occaſioned by the pedantry of thoſe two monarchs, Elizabeth and James, both great Latiniſts. For it is not to be wondered at, if both the court and ſchools, equal flatterers of power, ſhould adapt themſelves to the royal taſte.

But now I am touching on the queſtion (which has been ſo frequently agitated, yet ſo entirely undecided,) of his learning and acquaintance with the languages; an additional word or two naturally falls in here upon the genius of our author, as compared with that of Jonſon his contemporary. They are confeſſedly the greateſt writers our nation could ever boaſt of in the *drama*. The firſt, we ſay, owed all to his prodigious natural genius; and the other a great deal to his art and learning. This, if attended to, will explain a very remarkable appearance in their writings. Beſides thoſe wonderful maſter-pieces of art and genius, which each has given us; they are the authors of other works very unworthy of them: but with this difference, that in Jonſon's bad pieces we do not diſcover one ſingle trace of the author of *The Fox* and *Alchemiſt*; but, in the wild extravagant notes of Shakſpeare, you every now and then encounter ſtrains that recognize the divine compoſer. This

difference may be thus accounted for. Jonſon, as we ſaid before, owing all his excellence to his art, by which he ſometimes ſtrained himſelf to an uncommon pitch, when at other times he unbent and played with his ſubject, having nothing then to ſupport him, it is no wonder that he wrote ſo far beneath himſelf. But Shakſpeare, indebted more largely to nature than the other to acquired talents, in his moſt negligent hours could never ſo totally diveſt himſelf of his genius, but that it would frequently break out with aſtoniſhing force and ſplendor.

As I have never propoſed to dilate farther on the character of my author, than was neceſſary to explain the nature and uſe of this edition, I ſhall proceed to conſider him as a genius in poſſeſſion of an everlaſting name. And how great that merit muſt be, which could gain it againſt all the diſadvantages of the horrid condition in which he had hitherto appeared! Had Homer, or any other admired author, firſt ſtarted into publick ſo maimed and deformed, we cannot determine whether they had not ſunk for ever under the ignominy of ſuch an ill appearance. The mangled condition of Shakſpeare has been acknowledged by Mr. Rowe, who publiſhed him indeed, but neither corrected his text, nor collated the old copies. This gentleman had abilities, and ſufficient knowledge of his author, had but his induſtry been equal to his talents. The ſame mangled condition has been acknowledged too by Mr. Pope, who publiſhed him likewiſe, pretended to have collated the old copies, and yet ſeldom has corrected the text but to its injury. I congratulate with the *manes* of our poet, that this gentleman has been ſparing in *indulging his private ſenſe*, as he

phraſes it; for he, who tampers with an author, whom he does not underſtand, muſt do it at the expence of his ſubject. I have made it evident throughout my remarks, that he has frequently inflicted a wound where he intended a cure. He has acted with regard to our author, as an editor, whom LIPSIUS mentions, did with regard to MARTIAL; *Inventus eſt neſcio quis* Popa, *qui non* vitia *ejus, ſed* ipſum *excidit.* He has attacked him like an unhandy *ſlaughterman*; and not lopped off the *errors*, but the *poet.*

When this is found to be fact, how abſurd muſt appear the praiſes of ſuch an editor! It ſeems a moot point, whether Mr. Pope has done moſt injury to Shakſpeare, as his editor and encomiaſt; or Mr. Rymer done him ſervice, as his rival and cenſurer. They have both ſhown themſelves in an equal *impuiſsance* of ſuſpecting or amending the corrupted paſſages: and though it be neither prudence to cenſure or commend what one does not underſtand; yet if a man muſt do one when he plays the critick, the latter is the more ridiculous office; and by that Shakſpeare ſuffers moſt. For the natural veneration which we have for him makes [illegible]pt to ſwallow whatever is given us as *his*, and ſet off with encomiums; and hence we quit all ſuſpicions of depravity: on the contrary, the cenſure of ſo divine an author ſets us upon his defence; and this produces an exact ſcrutiny and examination, which ends in finding out and diſcriminating the true from the ſpurious.

It is not with any ſecret pleaſure that I ſo fr[illegible]quently animadvert on Mr. Pope as a critick, [illegible] there are provocations, which a man can nev[illegible] forget. His libels have been thrown ou[illegible] much inveteracy, that, not to diſpute y[illegible]

ſhould come from a *chriſtian*, they leave it a queſtion whether they *could* come from a *man*. I ſhould be loth to doubt, as Quintus Serenus did in a like caſe:

> " Sive homo, ſeu ſimilis turpiſſima beſtia nobis
> " Vulnera dente dedit.————"

The indignation, perhaps, for being repreſented a *blockhead*, may be as ſtrong in us, as it is in the ladies for a reflection on their *beauties*. It is certain, I am indebted to him for ſome *flagrant civilities*; and I ſhall willingly devote a part of my life to the honeſt endeavour of quitting ſcores: with this exception, however, that I will not return thoſe civilities in his *peculiar* ſtrain, but confine myſelf, at leaſt, to the limits of *common decency*. I ſhall ever think it better to want *wit*, than to want *humanity*: and impartial poſterity may, perhaps, be of my opinion.

But to return to my ſubject, which now calls upon me to enquire into thoſe cauſes, to which the depravations of my author originally may be aſſigned. We are to conſider him as a writer, of whom no authentick manuſcript was left ex[illegible]; as a writer, whoſe pieces were diſperſedly performed on the ſeveral *ſtages* then in being. And it was the cuſtom of thoſe days for the poets to take a price of the *players* for the pieces they from time to time furniſhed; and thereupon it was ſuppoſed they had no farther right to print them without the conſent of the *players*. As it was the intereſt of the *companies* to keep their plays unpubliſhed, if any one ſucceeded, there was a conteſt between curioſity of the town, who demanded to [illegible]nt, and the policy of the *ſtagers*, who

wiſhed to ſecrete it within their own walls. Hence many pieces were taken down in ſhort-hand, and imperfectly copied by ear from a *repreſentation*; others were printed from piecemeal parts ſurreptitiouſly obtained from the theatres, uncorrect, and without the poet's knowledge. To ſome of theſe cauſes we owe the train of blemiſhes, that deform thoſe pieces which ſtole ſingly into the world in our author's life-time.

There are ſtill other reaſons, which may be ſuppoſed to have affected the whole ſet. When the *players* took upon them to publiſh his works entire, every theatre was ranſacked to ſupply the copy; and *parts* collected, which had gone through as many changes as performers, either from mutilations or additions made to them. Hence we derive many chaſms and incoherences in the ſenſe and matter. Scenes were frequently tranſpoſed, and ſhuffled out of their true place, to humour the caprice, or ſuppoſed convenience, of ſome particular actor. Hence much confuſion and impropriety has attended and embarraſſed the buſineſs and fable. To theſe obvious cauſes of corruption it muſt be added, that our author has lain under the diſadvantage of having his errors propagated and multiplied by time: becauſe, for near a century, his works were publiſhed from the faulty copies, without the aſſiſtance of any intelligent editor: which has been the caſe likewiſe of many a *claſsick* writer.

The nature of any diſtemper once found has generally been the immediate ſtep to a cure. Shakſpeare's caſe has in a great meaſure reſembled that of a corrupt *claſsick*; and, conſequently, the method of cure was likewiſe to bear a reſemblance. By what means, and with what ſucceſs, this cure has

been affected on ancient writers, is too well known, and needs no formal illuſtration. The reputation, conſequent on taſks of that nature, invited me to attempt the method here; with this view, the hopes of reſtoring to the publick their greateſt poet in his original purity, after having ſo long lain in a condition that was a diſgrace to common ſenſe. To this end I have ventured on a labour, that is the firſt eſſay of the kind on any modern author whatſoever. For the late edition of Milton, by the learned Dr. Bentley, is, in the main, a performance of another ſpecies. It is plain, it was the intention of that great man rather to correct and pare off the excreſcencies of the *Paradiſe Loſt*, in the manner that Tucca and Varius were employed to criticiſe the *Æneis* of Virgil, than to reſtore corrupted paſſages. Hence, therefore, may be ſeen either the iniquity or ignorance of his cenſurers, who, from ſome expreſſions would make us believe the *doctor* every where gives us his corrections as the original text of the author; whereas the chief turn of his criticiſm is plainly to ſhow the world, that, if Milton did not write as he would have him, he ought to have wrote ſo.

I thought proper to premiſe this obſervation to the readers, as it will ſhow that the critick on Shakſpeare is of a quite different kind. His genuine text is for the moſt part religiouſly adhered to, and the numerous faults and blemiſhes, purely his own, are left as they were found. Nothing is altered but what by the cleareſt reaſoning can be proved a corruption of the true text; and the alteration, a real reſtoration of the genuine reading. Nay, ſo ſtrictly have I ſtrove to give the true reading, though ſometimes not to the advantage of my author, that I have been ridiculouſly ridi-

culed for it by thoſe, who either were iniquitouſly for turning every thing to my diſadvantage; or elſe were totally ignorant of the true duty of an editor.

The ſcience of criticiſm, as far as it effects an editor, ſeems to be reduced to theſe three claſſes; the emendation of corrupt paſſages; the explanation of obſcure and difficult ones; and an enquiry into the beauties and defects of compoſition. This work is principally confined to the two former parts: though there are ſome ſpecimens interſperſed of the latter kind, as ſeveral of the emendations were beſt ſupported, and ſeveral of the difficulties beſt explained, by taking notice of the beauties and defects of the compoſition peculiar to this immortal poet. But this was but occaſional, and for the ſake only of perfecting the two other parts, which were the proper objects of the editor's labour. The third lies open for every willing undertaker: and I ſhall be pleaſed to ſee it the employment of a maſterly pen.

It muſt neceſſarily happen, as I have formerly obſerved, that where the aſſiſtance of manuſcripts is wanting to ſet an author's meaning right, and reſcue him from thoſe errors which have been tranſmitted down through a ſeries of incorrect editions, and a long intervention of time, many paſſages muſt be deſperate, and paſt a cure; and their true ſenſe irretrievable either to care or the ſagacity of conjecture. But is there any reaſon therefore to ſay, that becauſe all cannot be retrieved, all ought to be left deſperate? We ſhould ſhow very little honeſty, or wiſdom, to play the tyrants with an author's text; to raze, alter, innovate, and overturn, at all adventures, and to the utter detriment of his ſenſe and meaning: but to

be ſo very reſerved and cautious, as to interpoſe no relief or conjecture, where it manifeſtly labours and cries out for aſſiſtance, ſeems, on the other hand, an indolent abſurdity.

As there are very few pages in Shakſpeare, upon which ſome ſuſpicions of depravity do not reaſonably ariſe; I have thought it my duty in the firſt place, by a diligent and laborious collation, to take in the aſſiſtances of all the older copies.

In his *hiſtorical plays*, whenever our Engliſh chronicles, and in his tragedies, when Greek or Roman ſtory could give any light, no pains have been omitted to ſet paſſages right, by comparing my author with his originals; for, as I have frequently obſerved, he was a cloſe and accurate copier wherever his *fable* was founded on *hiſtory*.

Wherever the author's ſenſe is clear and diſcoverable, (though, perchance, low and trivial,) I have not by any innovation tampered with his text, out of an oſtentation of endeavouring to make him ſpeak better than the old copies have done.

Where, through all the former editions, a paſſage has laboured under flat nonſenſe and invincible darkneſs, if, by the addition or alteration of a letter or two, or a tranſpoſition in the pointing, I have reſtored to him both ſenſe and ſentiment; ſuch corrections, I am perſuaded, will need no indulgence.

And whenever I have taken a greater latitude and liberty in amending, I have conſtantly endeavoured to ſupport my corrections and conjectures by parallel paſſages and authorities from himſelf, the ſureſt means of expounding any author whatſoever. *Cette voie d'interpreter un autheur par lui-même eſt plus ſure que tous les commentaires*, ſays a very learned French critick.

As to my *notes*, (from which the common and learned readers of our author, I hope, will derive ſome ſatisfaction,) I have endeavoured to give them a variety in ſome proportion to their number. Wherever I have ventured at an emendation, a *note* is conſtantly ſubjoined to juſtify and aſſert the reaſon of it. Where I only offer a conjecture, and do not diſturb the text, I fairly ſet forth my grounds for ſuch conjecture, and ſubmit it to judgment. Some remarks are ſpent in explaining paſſages, where the wit or ſatire depends on an obſcure point of hiſtory: others, where alluſions are to divinity, philoſophy, or other branches of ſcience. Some are added, to ſhow where there is a ſuſpicion of our author having borrowed from the ancients: others, to ſhow where he is rallying his contemporaries; or where he himſelf is rallied by them. And ſome are neceſſarily thrown in, to explain an obſcure and obſolete *term*, *phraſe*, or *idea*. I once intended to have added a complete and copious *gloſſary*; but as I have been importuned, and am prepared to give a correct edition of our author's POEMS, (in which many terms occur which are not to be met with in his *Plays*,) I thought a *gloſſary* to all Shakſpeare's works more proper to attend that volume.

In reforming an infinite number of paſſages in the *pointing*, where the ſenſe was before quite loſt, I have frequently ſubjoined notes to ſhow the *depraved*, and to prove the *reformed*, pointing: a part of labour in this work which I could very willingly have ſpared myſelf. May it not be objected, why then have you burdened us with theſe notes? The anſwer is obvious, and, if I miſtake not, very material. Without ſuch notes, theſe paſſages in ſubſequent editions would be liable,

through the ignorance of printers and correctors, to fall into the old confuſion: whereas, a note on every one hinders all poſſible return to depravity: and for ever ſecures them in a ſtate of purity and integrity not to be loſt or forfeited.

Again, as ſome notes have been neceſſary to point out the detection of the corrupted text, and eſtabliſh the reſtoration of the genuine reading; ſome others have been as neceſſary for the explanation of paſſages obſcure and difficult. To underſtand the neceſſity and uſe of this part of my taſk, ſome particulars of my author's character are previouſly to be explained. There are *obſcurities* in him, which are common to him with all poets of the ſame ſpecies; there are others, the iſſue of the times he lived in; and there are others, again, peculiar to himſelf. The nature of comick poetry being entirely ſatirical, it buſies itſelf more in expoſing what we call caprice and humour, than vices cognizable to the laws. The Engliſh, from the happineſs of a free conſtitution, and a turn of mind peculiarly ſpeculative and inquiſitive, are obſerved to produce more *humouriſts*, and a greater variety of original *characters*, than any other people whatſoever: and theſe owing their immediate birth to the peculiar genius of each age, an infinite number of things alluded to, glanced at, and expoſed, muſt needs become obſcure, as the *characters* themſelves are antiquated and diſuſed. An editor therefore ſhould be well verſed in the hiſtory and manners of his author's age, if he aims at doing him a ſervice in this reſpect.

Beſides, *wit* lying moſtly in the aſſemblage of *ideas*, and in putting thoſe together with quickneſs and variety, wherein can be found any reſemblance, or congruity, to make up pleaſant pictures, and

agreeable viſions in the fancy; the writer, who aims at wit, muſt of courſe range far and wide for materials. Now the age in which Shakſpeare lived, having, above all others, a wonderful affection to appear learned, they declined vulgar images, ſuch as are immediately fetched from nature, and ranged through the circle of the ſciences, to fetch their ideas from thence. But as the reſemblances of ſuch ideas to the ſubject muſt neceſſarily lie very much out of the common way, and every piece of wit appear a riddle to the vulgar; this, that ſhould have taught them the forced, quaint, unnatural tract they were in, (and induce them to follow a more natural one,) was the very thing that kept them attached to it. The oſtentatious affectation of abſtruſe learning, peculiar to that time, the love that men naturally have to every thing that looks like myſtery, fixed them down to the habit of obſcurity. Thus became the poetry of DONNE (though the wittieſt man of that age,) nothing but a continued heap of riddles. And our Shakſpeare, with all his eaſy nature about him, for want of the knowledge of the true rules of art, falls frequently into this vicious manner.

The third ſpecies of *obſcurities* which deform our author, as the effects of his own genius and character, are thoſe that proceed from his peculiar manner of *thinking*, and as peculiar a manner of *clothing* thoſe *thoughts*. With regard to his *thinking*, it is certain, that he had a general knowledge of all the ſciences: but his acquaintance was rather that of a traveller than a native. Nothing in philoſophy was unknown to him; but every thing in it had the grace and force of novelty. And as novelty is one main ſource of admiration, we are not to wonder that he has perpetual alluſions to the

moſt recondite parts of the ſciences: and this was done not ſo much out of affectation, as the effect of admiration begot by novelty. Then, as to his *ſtyle* and *diction*, we may much more juſtly apply to SHAKSPEARE, what a celebrated writer ſaid of MILTON: *Our language ſunk under him, and was unequal to that greatneſs of ſoul which furniſhed him with ſuch glorious conceptions.* He therefore frequently uſes old words, to give his diction an air of ſolemnity; as he coins others, to expreſs the novelty and variety of his ideas.

Upon every diſtinct ſpecies of theſe *obſcurities*, I have thought it my province to employ a note for the ſervice of my author, and the entertainment of my readers. A few tranſient remarks too I have not ſcrupled to intermix, upon the poet's *negligences* and *omiſſions* in point of art; but I have done it always in ſuch a manner, as will teſtify my deference and veneration for the immortal author. Some cenſurers of Shakſpeare, and particularly Mr. Rymer, have taught me to diſtinguiſh betwixt the *railer and critick.* The outrage of his quotations is ſo remarkably violent, ſo puſhed beyond all bounds of decency and ſober reaſoning, that it quite carries over the mark at which it was levelled. Extravagant abuſe throws off the edge of the intended diſparagement, and turns the madman's weapon into his own boſom. In ſhort, as to Rymer, this is my opinion of him from his *criticiſms* on the *tragedies* of the laſt age. He writes with great vivacity, and appears to have been a ſcholar: but as for his knowledge of the art of poetry, I cannot perceive it was any deeper than his acquaintance with Boſſu and Dacier, from whom he has tranſcribed many of his beſt reflections. The late Mr. Gildon was one attached to Rymer by a

ſimilar way of thinking and ſtudies. They were both of that ſpecies of criticks who are deſirous of diſplaying their powers rather in finding faults, than in conſulting the improvement of the world; the *hypercritical* part of the ſcience of *criticiſm*.

I had not mentioned the modeſt liberty I have here and there taken of animadverting on my author, but that I was willing to obviate in time the ſplenetick exaggerations of my adverſaries on this head. From paſt experiments I have reaſon to be conſcious, in what light this attempt may be placed: and that what I call a *modeſt liberty* will, by a little of their dexterity, be inverted into downright *impudence*. From a hundred mean and diſhoneſt artifices employed to diſcredit this edition, and to cry down its editor, I have all the grounds in nature to beware of attacks. But though the malice of wit, joined to the ſmoothneſs of verſification, may furniſh ſome ridicule; fact, I hope, will be able to ſtand its ground againſt banter and gaiety.

It has been my fate, it ſeems, as I thought it my duty, to diſcover ſome *anachroniſms* in our author; which might have ſlept in obſcurity but for *this Reſtorer*, as Mr. Pope is pleaſed affectionately to ſtyle me: as for inſtance, where Ariſtotle is mentioned by Hector in *Troilus and Creſsida*; and Galen, Cato, and Alexander the Great, in *Coriolanus*. Theſe, in Mr. Pope's opinion, are blunders, which the illiteracy of the firſt publiſhers of his works has fathered upon the poet's memory: *it not being at all credible, that theſe could be the errors of any man who had the leaſt tincture of a ſchool, or the leaſt converſation with ſuch as had.* But I have ſufficiently proved, in the courſe of my *notes*, that ſuch *anachroniſms* were the effect of poetick licence, rather than of ignorance in our poet. And if I

may be permitted to aſk a modeſt queſtion by the way, why may not I reſtore an *anachroniſm* really made by our author, as well as Mr. Pope take the privilege to fix others upon him, which he never had it in his head to make; as I may venture to affirm he had not, in the inſtance of Sir Francis Drake, to which I have ſpoke in the proper place?

But who ſhall dare make any words about this freedom of Mr. Pope's towards Shakſpeare, if it can be proved, that, in his fits of criticiſm, he makes no more ceremony with good Homer himſelf? To try, then, a criticiſm of his own advancing: in the 8th Book of *The Odyſſey*, where Demodocus ſings the epiſode of the loves of Mars and Venus; and that, upon their being taken in the net by Vulcan,

> " ——————— The god of arms
> " Muſt pay the penalty for lawleſs charms;"

Mr. Pope is ſo kind gravely to inform us, " That Homer in this, as in many other places, ſeems to allude to the laws of Athens, where death was the puniſhment of adultery." But how is this ſignificant obſervation made out? Why, who can poſſibly object any thing to the contrary?——*Does not Pauſanias relate that Draco, the lawgiver to the Athenians, granted impunity to any perſon that took revenge upon an adulterer? And was it not alſo the inſtitution of Solon, that if any one took an adulterer in the fact, he might uſe him as he pleaſed?* Theſe things are very true: and to ſee what a good memory, and ſound judgment in conjunction, can achieve! though Homer's date is not determined down to a ſingle year, yet it is pretty generally agreed that he lived above three hundred years be-

fore Draco and Solon: and that, it ſeems, has made him *ſeem* to allude to the very laws, which theſe two legiſlators propounded above three hundred years after. If this inference be not ſomething like an *anachroniſm* or *prolepſis*, I will look once more into my lexicons for the true meaning of the words. It appears to me, that ſomebody beſides Mars and Venus has been caught in a net by this epiſode: and I could call in other inſtances, to confirm what treacherous tackle this net-work is, if not cautiouſly handled.

How juſt, notwithſtanding, I have been in detecting the *anachroniſms* of my author, and in defending him for the uſe of them, our late editor ſeems to think, they ſhould rather have ſlept in obſcurity: and the having diſcovered them is ſneered at, as a ſort of wrong-headed ſagacity.

The numerous corrections which I have made of the poet's text in my SHAKSPEARE *Reſtored*, and which the publick have been ſo kind to think well of, are, in the appendix of Mr. Pope's laſt edition, ſlightingly called *various readings, gueſſes*, &c. He confeſſes to have inſerted as many of them as he judged of any the leaſt advantage to the poet; but ſays, that the whole amounted to about twenty five words: and pretends to have annexed a complete liſt of the reſt, which were not worth his embracing. Whoever has read my book will, at one glance, ſee how in both theſe points veracity is ſtrained, ſo an injury might be done. *Malus, etſi obeſſe non pote, tamen cogitat.*

Another expedient to make my work appear of a trifling nature, has been an attempt to depreciate *literal criticiſm*. To this end, and to pay a ſervile compliment to Mr. Pope, an *anonymous* writer[6] has,

[6] David Mallet. See his poem *Of Verbal Criticiſm*, Vol. I. of his works, 12mo. 1759. REED.

like a Scotch pedlar in wit, unbraced his pack on the ſubject. But, that his virulence might not ſeem to be levelled ſingly at me, he has done me the honour to join Dr. Bentley in the libel. I was in hopes we ſhould have been both abuſed with ſmartneſs of ſatire at leaſt, though not with ſolidity of argument; that it might have been worth ſome reply in defence of the ſcience attacked. But I may fairly ſay of this author, as Falſtaff does of Poins:—*Hang him, baboon! his wit is as thick as Tewkſbury muſtard; there is no more conceit in him, than is in a* MALLET. If it be not a prophanation to ſet the opinion of the divine Longinus againſt ſuch a ſcribbler, he tells us expreſsly, "That to make a judgment upon *words* (and *writings*) is the moſt conſummate fruit of much experience." ἡ γαρ τῶν λόγων κρίσις ϖολλῆς ἐςι καὶ τελευταίων ἐπιγένημα. Whenever words are depraved, the ſenſe of courſe muſt be corrupted; and thence the reader is betrayed into a falſe meaning.

If the Latin and Greek languages have received the greateſt advantages imaginable from the labours of the editors and criticks of the two laſt ages, by whoſe aid and aſſiſtance the grammarians have been enabled to write infinitely better in that art than even the preceding grammarians, who wrote when thoſe tongues flouriſhed as living languages; I ſhould account it a peculiar happineſs, that, by the faint eſſay I have made in this work, a path might be chalked out for abler hands, by which to derive the ſame advantages to our own tongue; a tongue, which, though it wants none of the fundamental qualities of an univerſal language, yet, as a *noble writer* ſays, liſps and ſtammers as in its cradle; and has produced little more towards its poliſhing than complaints of its barbarity.

Having now run through all thoſe points, which I intended ſhould make any part of this diſſertation, and having in my *former* edition made publick acknowledgments of the aſſiſtances lent me, I ſhall conclude with a brief account of the methods taken in *this*.

It was thought próper, in order to reduce the bulk and price of the impreſſion, that the notes, wherever they would admit of it, might be abridged: for which reaſon I have curtailed a great quantity of ſuch, in which explanations were too prolix, or authorities in ſupport of an emendation too numerous: and many I have entirely expunged, which were judged rather verboſe and declamatory (and ſo notes merely of oſtentation) than neceſſary or inſtructive.

The few literal errors which had eſcaped notice for want of reviſals, in the former edition, are here reformed; and the pointing of innumerable paſſages is regulated, with all the accuracy I am capable of.

I ſhall decline making any farther declaration of the pains I have taken upon my author, becauſe it was my duty, as his editor, to publiſh him with my beſt care and judgment; and becauſe I am ſenſible, all ſuch declarations are conſtrued to be laying a ſort of debt on the publick. As the former edition has been received with much indulgence, I ought to make my acknowledgments to the town for their favourable opinion of it; and I ſhall always be proud to think that encouragement the beſt payment I can hope to receive from my poor ſtudies.

SIR THOMAS HANMER'S

PREFACE.

WHAT the publick is here to expect is a true and correct edition of Shakſpeare's works, cleared from the corruptions with which they have hitherto abounded. One of the great admirers of this incomparable author hath made it the amuſement of his leiſure hours for many years paſt to look over his writings with a careful eye, to note the obſcurities and abſurdities introduced into the text, and according to the beſt of his judgment to reſtore the genuine ſenſe and purity of it. In this he propoſed nothing to himſelf, but his private ſatisfaction in making his own copy as perfect as he could: but, as the emendations multiplied upon his hands, other gentlemen, equally fond of the author, deſired to ſee them, and ſome were ſo kind as to give their aſſiſtance, by communicating their obſervations and conjectures upon difficult paſſages which had occurred to them. Thus by degrees the work growing more conſiderable than was at firſt expected, they who had the opportunity of looking into it, too partial perhaps in their judgment, thought it worth being made publick; and he, who hath with difficulty yielded to their perſuaſions, is far from deſiring to reflect upon the late editors for the omiſſions and defects which they left to be ſupplied by others who ſhould

follow them in the ſame province. On the contrary, he thinks the world much obliged to them for the progreſs they made in weeding out ſo great a number of blunders and miſtakes as they have done; and probably he who hath carried on the work might never have thought of ſuch an undertaking, if he had not found a conſiderable part ſo done to his hands.

From what cauſes it proceeded that the works of this author, in the firſt publication of them, were more injured and abuſed than perhaps any that ever paſſed the preſs, hath been ſufficiently explained in the preface to Mr. Pope's edition, which is here ſubjoined, and there needs no more to be ſaid upon that ſubject. This only the reader is deſired to bear in mind, that as the corruptions are more numerous, and of a groſſer kind than can be well conceived but by thoſe who have looked nearly into them; ſo in the correcting them this rule hath been moſt ſtrictly obſerved, not to give a looſe to fancy, or indulge a licentious ſpirit of criticiſm, as if it were fit for any one to preſume to judge what Shakſpeare ought to have written, inſtead of endeavouring to diſcover truly and retrieve what he did write: and ſo great caution hath been uſed in this reſpect, that no alterations have been made, but what the ſenſe neceſſarily required, what the meaſure of the verſe often helped to point out, and what the ſimilitude of words in the falſe reading and in the true, generally ſpeaking, appeared very well to juſtify.

Moſt of thoſe paſſages are here thrown to the bottom of the page, and rejected as ſpurious, which were ſtigmatized as ſuch in Mr. Pope's edition; and it were to be wiſhed that more had then undergone the ſame ſentence. The promoter of the

preſent edition hath ventured to diſcard but few more upon his own judgment, the moſt conſiderable of which is that wretched piece of ribaldry in *King Henry the Fifth*, put into the mouths of the French princeſs and an old gentlewoman, improper enough as it is all in French, and not intelligible to an Engliſh audience, and yet that perhaps is the beſt thing that can be ſaid of it. There can be no doubt but a great deal more of that low ſtuff, which diſgraces the works of this great author, was foiſted in by the players after his death, to pleaſe the vulgar audiences by which they ſubſiſted: and though ſome of the poor witticiſms and conceits muſt be ſuppoſed to have fallen from his pen, yet as he hath put them generally into the mouths of low and ignorant people, ſo it is to be remembered that he wrote for the ſtage, rude and unpoliſhed as it then was; and the vicious taſte of the age muſt ſtand condemned for them, ſince he hath left upon record a ſignal proof how much he deſpiſed them. In his play of *The Merchant of Venice*, a clown is introduced quibbling in a miſerable manner; upon which one, who bears the character of a man of ſenſe, makes the following reflection: *How every fool can play upon a word! I think the beſt grace of wit will ſhortly turn into ſilence, and diſcourſe grow commendable in none but parrots.* He could hardly have found ſtronger words to expreſs his indignation at thoſe falſe pretences to wit then in vogue; and therefore though ſuch traſh is frequently interſperſed in his writings, it would be unjuſt to caſt it as an imputation upon his taſte and judgment and character as a writer.

There being many words in Shakſpeare which are grown out of uſe and obſolete, and many borrowed from other languages which are not enough

naturalized or known among us, a gloſſary is added at the end of the work, for the explanation of all thoſe terms which have hitherto been ſo many ſtumbling-blocks to the generality of readers; and where there is any obſcurity in the text, not ariſing from the words, but from a reference to ſome antiquated cuſtoms now forgotten, or other cauſes of that kind, a note is put at the bottom of the page, to clear up the difficulty.

With theſe ſeveral helps, if that rich vein of ſenſe which runs through the works of this author can be retrieved in every part, and brought to appear in its true light, and if it may be hoped, without preſumption, that this is here effected; they who love and admire him will receive a new pleaſure, and all probably will be more ready to join in doing him juſtice, who does great honour to his country as a rare and perhaps a ſingular genius; one who hath attained a high degree of perfection in thoſe two great branches of poetry, tragedy and comedy, different as they are in their natures from each other; and who may be ſaid without partiality to have equalled, if not excelled, in both kinds, the beſt writers of any age or country, who have thought it glory enough to diſtinguiſh themſelves in either.

Since therefore other nations have taken care to dignify the works of their moſt celebrated poets with the faireſt impreſſions beautified with the ornaments of ſculpture, well may our Shakſpeare be thought to deſerve no leſs conſideration: and as a freſh acknowledgment hath lately been paid to his merit, and a high regard to his name and memory, by erecting his ſtatue at a publick expence; ſo it is deſired that this new edition of his

works, which hath coſt ſome attention and care, may be looked upon as another ſmall monument deſigned and dedicated to his honour.

DR. WARBURTON'S

PREFACE.

IT hath been no unuſual thing for writers, when diſſatisfied with the patronage or judgment of their own times, to appeal to poſterity for a fair hearing. Some have even thought fit to apply to it in the firſt inſtance; and to decline acquaintance with the publick, till envy and prejudice had quite ſubſided. But, of all the truſters to futurity, commend me to the author of the following poems, who not only left it to time to do him juſtice as it would, but to find him out as it could. For, what between too great attention to his profit as a player, and too little to his reputation as a poet, his works, left to the care of door-keepers and prompters, hardly eſcaped the common fate of thoſe writings, how good ſoever, which are abandoned to their own fortune, and unprotected by party or cabal. At length, indeed, they ſtruggled into light; but ſo diſguiſed and traveſted, that no claſſick author, after having run ten ſecular ſtages

through the blind cloiſters of monks and canons, ever came out in half ſo maimed and mangled a condition. But for a full account of his diſorders, I refer the reader to the excellent diſcourſe which follows,[7] and turn myſelf to conſider the remedies that have been applied to them.

Shakſpeare's works, when they eſcaped the players, did not fall into much better hands when they came amongſt printers and bookſellers; who, to ſay the truth, had at firſt but ſmall encouragement for putting them into a better condition. The ſtubborn nonſenſe, with which he was incruſted, occaſioned his lying long neglected amongſt the common lumber of the ſtage. And when that reſiſtleſs ſplendor, which now ſhoots all around him, had, by degrees, broke through the ſhell of thoſe impurities, his dazzled admirers became as ſuddenly inſenſible to the extraneous ſcurf that ſtill ſtuck upon him, as they had been before to the native beauties that lay under it. So that, as then he was thought not to deſerve a cure, he was now ſuppoſed not to need any.

His growing eminence, however, required that he ſhould be uſed with ceremony; and he ſoon had his appointment of an editor in form. But the bookſeller, whoſe dealing was with wits, having learnt of them, I know not what ſilly maxim, that *none but a poet ſhould preſume to meddle with a poet*, engaged the ingenious Mr. Rowe to undertake this employment. A wit indeed he was; but ſo utterly unacquainted with the whole buſineſs of criticiſm, that he did not even collate or conſult the firſt editions of the work he undertook to publiſh; but contented himſelf with giving us a

[7] Mr. Pope's Preface. REED.

meagre account of the author's life, interlarded with ſome common-place ſcraps from his writings. The truth is, Shakſpeare's condition was yet but ill underſtood. The nonſenſe, now, by conſent, received for his own, was held in a kind of reverence for its age and author; and thus it continued till another great *poet* broke the charm, by ſhowing us, that the higher we went, the leſs of it was ſtill to be found.

For the proprietors, not diſcouraged by their firſt unſucceſsful effort, in due time, made a ſecond; and, though they ſtill ſtuck to their poets, with infinitely more ſucceſs in their choice of Mr. Pope, who, by the mere force of an uncommon genius, without any particular ſtudy or profeſſion of this art, diſcharged the great parts of it ſo well, as to make his edition the beſt foundation for all further improvements. He ſeparated the genuine from the ſpurious plays; and, with equal judgment, though not always with the ſame ſucceſs, attempted to clear the genuine plays from the interpolated ſcenes: he then conſulted the old editions; and, by a careful collation of them, rectified the faulty, and ſupplied the imperfect reading, in a great number of places: and laſtly, in an admirable preface, hath drawn a general, but very lively ſketch of Shakſpeare's poetick character; and, in the corrected text, marked out thoſe peculiar ſtrokes of genius which were moſt proper to ſupport and illuſtrate that character. Thus far Mr. Pope. And although much more was to be done before Shakſpeare could be reſtored to himſelf (ſuch as amending the corrupted text where the printed books afford no aſſiſtance; explaining his licentious phraſeology and obſcure alluſions; and illuſtrating the beauties of his

poetry); yet, with great modeſty and prudence, our illuſtrious editor left this to the critick by profeſſion.

But nothing will give the common reader a better idea of the value of Mr. Pope's edition, than the two attempts which have been ſince made by Mr. Theobald and Sir Thomas Hanmer in oppoſition to it; who, although they concerned themſelves only in the *firſt* of theſe three parts of criticiſm, the *reſtoring the text*, (without any conception of the *ſecond*, or venturing even to touch upon the *third*,) yet ſucceeded ſo very ill in it, that they left their author in ten times a worſe condition than they found him. But, as it was my ill fortune to have ſome accidental connections with theſe two gentlemen, it will be incumbent on me to be a little more particular concerning them.

The one was recommended to me as a poor man; the other as a poor critick: and to each of them, at different times, I communicated a great number of obſervations, which they managed, as they ſaw fit, to the relief of their ſeveral diſtreſſes. As to Mr. Theobald, who wanted money, I allowed him to print what I gave him for his own advantage; and he allowed himſelf in the liberty of taking one part for his own, and ſequeſtering another for the benefit, as I ſuppoſed, of ſome future edition. But, as to the Oxford editor, who wanted nothing but what he might very well be without, the reputation of a critick, I could not ſo eaſily forgive him for trafficking with my papers, without my knowledge; and, when that project failed, for employing a number of my conjectures in his edition againſt my expreſs deſire not to have that honour done unto me.

Mr. Theobald was naturally turned to induſtry

and labour. What he read he could tranſcribe: but, as what he thought, if ever he did think, he could but ill expreſs, ſo he read on: and by that means got a character of learning, without riſquing, to every obſerver, the imputation of wanting a better talent. By a punctilious collation of the old books, he corrected what was manifeſtly wrong in the *latter* editions, by what was manifeſtly right in the *earlier*. And this is his real merit; and the whole of it. For where the phraſe was very obſolete or licentious in the *common* books, or only ſlightly corrupted in the *other*, he wanted ſufficient knowledge of the progreſs and various ſtages of the Engliſh tongue, as well as acquaintance with the peculiarity of Shakſpeare's language, to underſtand what was right; nor had he either common judgment to ſee, or critical ſagacity to amend, what was manifeſtly faulty. Hence he generally exerts his conjectural talent in the wrong place: he tampers with what is found in the *common* books; and, in the *old* ones, omits all notice of *variations*, the ſenſe of which he did not underſtand.

How the Oxford editor came to think himſelf qualified for this office, from which his whole courſe of life had been ſo remote, is ſtill more difficult to conceive. For whatever parts he might have either of genius or erudition, he was abſolutely ignorant of the art of criticiſm, as well as of the poetry of that time, and the language of his author. And ſo far from a thought of examining the *firſt* editions, that he even neglected to compare Mr. Pope's, from which he printed his own, with Mr. Theobald's; whereby he loſt the advantage of many fine lines, which the other had recovered from the old quartos. Where he truſts to his own ſagacity, in what affects the ſenſe, his

conjectures are generally abſurd and extravagant, and violating every rule of criticiſm. Though, in this rage of correcting, he was not abſolutely deſtitute of all *art*. For, having a number of my conjectures before him, he took as many of them as he ſaw fit, to work upon; and by changing them to ſomething, he thought, ſynonymous or ſimilar, he made them his own; and ſo became a critick at a cheap expence. But how well he hath ſucceeded in this, as likewiſe in his conjectures, which are properly his own, will be ſeen in the courſe of my remarks; though, as he hath declined to give the reaſons for his interpolations, he hath not afforded me ſo fair a hold of him as Mr. Theobald hath done, who was leſs cautious. But his principal object was to reform his author's numbers; and this, which he hath done, on every occaſion, by the inſertion or omiſſion of a ſet of harmleſs unconcerning expletives, makes up the groſs body of his innocent corrections. And ſo, in ſpite of that extreme negligence in numbers, which diſtinguiſhes the firſt dramatick writers, he hath tricked up the old bard, from head to foot, in all the finical exactneſs of a modern meaſurer of ſyllables.

For the reſt, all the corrections, which theſe two editors have made on any *reaſonable* foundation, are here admitted into the text; and carefully aſſigned to their reſpective authors: a piece of juſtice which the Oxford editor never did; and which the *other* was not always ſcrupulous in obſerving towards me. To conclude with them in a word, they ſeparately poſſeſſed thoſe two qualities which, more than any other, have contributed to bring the art of criticiſm into diſrepute, *dulneſs of apprehenſion*, and *extravagance of conjecture*.

I am now to give ſome account of the preſent

undertaking. For as to all thoſe things which have been publiſhed under the titles of *Eſſays, Remarks, Obſervations, &c. on Shakſpeare,* (if you except ſome critical notes on *Macbeth*,[8] given as a ſpecimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius,) the reſt are abſolutely below a ſerious notice.

The whole a critick can do for an author, who deſerves his ſervice, is to correct the faulty text; to remark the peculiarities of language; to illuſtrate the obſcure alluſions; and to explain the beauties and defects of ſentiment or compoſition. And ſurely, if ever author had a claim to this ſervice, it was our Shakſpeare; who, widely excelling in the knowledge of human nature, hath given to his infinitely varied pictures of it, ſuch truth of deſign, ſuch force of drawing, ſuch beauty of colouring, as was hardly ever equalled by any writer, whether his aim was the uſe, or only the entertainment of mankind. The notes in this edition, therefore, take in the whole compaſs of criticiſm.

I. The firſt ſort is employed in reſtoring the poet's genuine text; but in thoſe places only where it labours with inextricable nonſenſe. In which, how much ſoever I may have given ſcope to critical conjecture, where the old copies failed me, I have indulged nothing to fancy or imagination; but have religiouſly obſerved the ſevere canons of literal criticiſm, as may be ſeen from the reaſons accompanying every alteration of the common text. Nor would a different conduct have become a critick, whoſe greateſt attention, in this part, was to vindicate the eſtabliſhed reading from interpola-

[8] Publiſhed in 1745, by Dr. Johnſon. REED.

tions occaſioned by the fanciful extravagancies of others. I once intended to have given the reader a *body of canons*, for literal criticiſm, drawn out in form; as well ſuch as concern the art in general, as thoſe that ariſe from the nature and circumſtances of our author's works in particular. And this for two reaſons. Firſt, to give the *unlearned reader* a juſt idea, and conſequently a better opinion of the art of criticiſm, now ſunk very low in the popular eſteem, by the attempts of ſome who would needs exerciſe it without either natural or acquired talents; and by the ill ſucceſs of others, who ſeemed to have loſt both, when they came to try them upon Engliſh authors. Secondly, To deter the *unlearned writer* from wantonly trifling with an art he is a ſtranger to, at the expence of his own reputation, and the integrity of the text of eſtabliſhed authors. But theſe uſes may be well ſupplied by what is occaſionally ſaid upon the ſubject, in the courſe of the following remarks.

II. The ſecond ſort of notes conſiſts in an explanation of the author's meaning, when by one or more of theſe cauſes it becomes obſcure; either from a *licentious uſe of terms*, or *a hard or ungrammatical conſtruction*; or laſtly, from *far-fetched or quaint alluſions*.

1. This licentious uſe of words is almoſt peculiar to the language of Shakſpeare. To common terms he hath affixed meanings of his own, unauthorized by uſe, and not to be juſtified by analogy. And this liberty he hath taken with the nobleſt parts of ſpeech, ſuch as *mixed modes*; which, as they are moſt ſuſceptible of abuſe, ſo their abuſe much hurts the clearneſs of the diſcourſe. The criticks (to whom Shakſpeare's licence was ſtill as much a ſecret as his meaning which that licence

had obſcured) fell into two contrary miſtakes; but equally injurious to his reputation and his writings. For ſome of them, obſerving a darkneſs that pervaded his whole expreſſion, have cenſured him for confuſion of ideas and inaccuracy of reaſoning. *In the neighing of a horſe* (ſays Rymer) *or in the growling of a maſtiff, there is a meaning, there is a lively expreſsion, and, may I ſay, more humanity than many times in the tragical flights of Shakſpeare.* The ignorance of which cenſure is of a piece with its brutality. The truth is, no one thought clearer, or argued more cloſely, than this immortal bard. But his ſuperiority of genius leſs needing the intervention of words in the act of thinking, when he came to draw out his contemplations into diſcourſe, he took up (as he was hurried on by the torrent of his matter) with the firſt words that lay in his way; and if, amongſt theſe, there were two *mixed modes* that had but a principal idea in common, it was enough for him; he regarded them as ſynonymous, and would uſe the one for the other without fear or ſcruple.——Again, there have been others, ſuch as the two laſt editors, who have fallen into a contrary extreme; and regarded Shakſpeare's anomalies (as we may call them) amongſt the corruptions of his text; which, therefore, they have caſhiered in great numbers, to make room for a jargon of their own. This hath put me to additional trouble; for I had not only their interpolations to throw out again, but the genuine text to replace, and eſtabliſh in its ſtead; which, in many caſes, could not be done without ſhowing the peculiar ſenſe of the terms, and explaining the cauſes which led the poet to ſo perverſe a uſe of them. I had it once, indeed, in my deſign, to give a general alphabetick *gloſsary* of thoſe

terms; but as each of them is explained in its proper place, there ſeemed the leſs occaſion for ſuch an index.

2. The poet's hard and unnatural conſtruction had a different original. This was the effect of miſtaken art and deſign. The publick taſte was in its infancy; and delighted (as it always does during that ſtate) in the high and turgid; which leads the writer to diſguiſe a vulgar expreſſion with hard and forced conſtruction, whereby the ſentence frequently becomes cloudy and dark. Here his criticks ſhow their modeſty, and leave him to himſelf. For the arbitrary change of a word doth little towards diſpelling an obſcurity that ariſeth, not from the licentious uſe of a ſingle term, but from the unnatural arrangement of a whole ſentence. And they riſqued nothing by their ſilence. For Shakſpeare was too clear in fame to be ſuſpected of a want of meaning; and too high in faſhion for any one to own he needed a critick to find it out. Not but, in his beſt works, we muſt allow, he is often ſo natural and flowing, ſo pure and correct, that he is even a model for ſtyle and language.

3. As to his far-fetched and quaint alluſions, theſe are often a cover to common thoughts; juſt as his hard conſtruction is to common expreſſion. When they are not ſo, the explanation of them has this further advantage, that, in clearing the obſcurity, you frequently diſcover ſome latent conceit not unworthy of his genius.

III. The third and laſt ſort of notes is concerned in a critical explanation of the author's beauties and defects; but chiefly of his beauties, whether in ſtyle, thought, ſentiment, character, or compoſition. An odd humour of finding fault hath long prevailed amongſt the criticks; as if nothing

were worth *remarking*, that did not, at the ſame time, deſerve to be reproved. Whereas the publick judgment hath leſs need to be aſſiſted in what it ſhall reject, than in what it ought to prize; men being generally more ready at ſpying faults than in diſcovering beauties. Nor is the value they ſet upon a work, a certain proof that they underſtand it. For it is ever ſeen, that half a dozen voices of credit give the lead: and if the publick chance to be in good humour, or the author much in their favour, the people are ſure to follow. Hence it is that the true critick hath ſo frequently attached himſelf to works of eſtabliſhed reputation; not to teach the world to *admire*, which, in thoſe circumſtances, to ſay the truth, they are apt enough to do of themſelves; but to teach them how, *with reaſon to admire:* no eaſy matter, I will aſſure you, on the ſubject in queſtion: for though it be very true, as Mr. Pope hath obſerved, that *Shakſpeare is the faireſt and fulleſt ſubject for criticiſm*, yet it is not ſuch a ſort of criticiſm as may be raiſed mechanically on the rules which Dacier, Rapin, and Boſſu, have collected from antiquity; and of which, ſuch kind of writers as Rymer, Gildon, Dennis, and Oldmixon, have only gathered and chewed the huſks: nor on the other hand is it to be formed on the plan of thoſe crude and ſuperficial judgments, on books and things, with which a certain celebrated paper[9] ſo much abounds; too good indeed to be named with the writers laſt mentioned, but being unluckily miſtaken for a *model*, becauſe it was an *original*, it hath given riſe to a deluge of the worſt ſort of critical jargon; I mean that which looks moſt like ſenſe. But the kind of criticiſm

[9] The Spectator. REED.

here required, is ſuch as judgeth our author by thoſe only laws and principles on which he wrote, NATURE, and COMMON-SENSE.

Our obſervations, therefore, being thus extenſive, will, I preſume, enable the reader to form a right judgment of this favourite poet, without drawing out his character, as was once intended, in a continued diſcourſe.

Theſe, ſuch as they are, were among my younger amuſements, when, many years ago, I uſed to turn over theſe ſort of writers to unbend myſelf from more ſerious applications: and what certainly the publick at this time of day had never been troubled with, but for the conduct of the two laſt editors, and the perſuaſions of dear Mr. Pope; whoſe memory and name,

> " ——————— ſemper acerbum,
> " Semper honoratum (ſic Di voluiſtis) habebo."

He was deſirous I ſhould give a new edition of this poet, as he thought it might contribute to put a ſtop to a prevailing folly of altering the text of celebrated authors without talents or judgment. And he was willing that *his* edition ſhould be melted down into *mine*, as it would, he ſaid, afford him (ſo great is the modeſty of an ingenuous temper) a fit opportunity of confeſſing his miſtakes.[1] In memory of our friendſhip, I have, therefore, made it our joint edition. His admirable preface is here added; all his notes are given, with his name annexed; the ſcenes are divided according to his regulation; and the moſt beautiful paſſages diſtinguiſhed, as in his book, with inverted commas.

[1] See his Letters to me.

In imitation of him, I have done the ſame by as many others as I thought moſt deſerving of the reader's attention, and have marked them with *double* commas.

If, from all this, Shakſpeare or good letters have received any advantage, and the publick any benefit, or entertainment, the thanks are due to the *proprietors*, who have been at the expence of procuring this edition. And I ſhould be unjuſt to ſeveral deſerving men of a reputable and uſeful profeſſion, if I did not, on this occaſion, acknowledge the fair dealing I have always found amongſt them; and profeſs my ſenſe of the unjuſt prejudice which lies againſt them; whereby they have been, hitherto, unable to procure that ſecurity for their property, which they ſee the reſt of their fellow-citizens enjoy. A prejudice in part ariſing from the frequent *piracies* (as they are called) committed by members of their own body. But ſuch kind of members no body is without. And it would be hard that this ſhould be turned to the diſcredit of the honeſt part of the profeſſion, who ſuffer more from ſuch injuries than any other men. It hath, in part too, ariſen from the clamours of profligate ſcribblers, ever ready, for a piece of money, to proſtitute their bad ſenſe for or againſt any cauſe profane or ſacred; or in any ſcandal publick or private: theſe meeting with little encouragement from men of account in the trade (who, even in this enlightened age, are not the very worſt judges or rewarders of merit,) apply themſelves to people of condition; and ſupport their importunities by falſe complaints againſt *bookſellers*.

But I ſhould now, perhaps, rather think of my own apology, than buſy myſelf in the defence of others. I ſhall have ſome *Tartuffe* ready, on the

firſt appearance of this edition, to call out again, and tell me, that *I ſuffer myſelf to be wholly diverted from my purpoſe by theſe matters leſs ſuitable to my clerical profeſſion.* "Well, but (ſays a friend) why not take ſo candid an intimation in good part? Withdraw yourſelf again, as you are bid, into the clerical pale; examine the records of ſacred and profane antiquity; and, on them, erect a work to the confuſion of infidelity." Why, I have done all this, and more: and hear now what the ſame men have ſaid to it. They tell me, *I have wrote to the wrong and injury of religion, and furniſhed out more handles for unbelievers.* "Oh! now the ſecret is out; and you may have your pardon, I find, upon eaſier terms. It is only to write no more." ——Good gentlemen! and ſhall I not oblige them? They would gladly *obſtruct* my way to thoſe things which every man, who *endeavours well* in his profeſſion, muſt needs think he has ſome claim to, when he ſees them given to thoſe who never did *endeavour*; at the ſame time that they would *deter* me from taking thoſe advantages which letters enable me to procure for myſelf. If then I am to write no more (though as much out of my profeſſion as they may pleaſe to repreſent this work, I ſuſpect their modeſty would not inſiſt on a ſcrutiny of our ſeveral applications of this profane profit and their purer gains,) if, I ſay, I am to write no more, let me at leaſt give the publick, who have a better pretence to demand it of me, ſome reaſon for my preſenting them with theſe amuſements: which, if I am not much miſtaken, may be excuſed by the beſt and faireſt *examples*; and, what is more, may be juſtified on the ſurer *reaſon of things.*

The great Saint CHRYSOSTOM, a name conſe-

crated to immortality by his virtue and eloquence, is known to have been ſo fond of Ariſtophanes, as to wake with him at his ſtudies, and to ſleep with him under his pillow: and I never heard that this was objected either to his piety or his preaching, not even in thoſe times of pure zeal and primitive religion. Yet, in reſpect of Shakſpeare's great ſenſe, Ariſtophanes's beſt wit is but buffoonery; and, in compariſon of Ariſtophanes's freedoms, Shakſpeare writes with the purity of a veſtal. But they will ſay, St. Chryſoſtom contracted a fondneſs for the comick poet *for the ſake of his Greek.* To this, indeed, I have nothing to reply. Far be it from me to inſinuate ſo unſcholar-like a thing, as if we had the ſame uſe for good Engliſh, that a Greek had for his Attick elegance. Critick Kuſter, in a taſte and language peculiar to grammarians of a certain order, hath decreed, that *the hiſtory and chronology of Greek words is the moſt SOLID entertainment of a man of letters.*

I fly then to a higher example, much nearer home, and ſtill more in point, the famous univerſity of OXFORD. This illuſtrious body, which hath long ſo juſtly held, and with ſuch equity diſpenſed the chief honours of the learned world, thought good letters ſo much intereſted in correct editions of the beſt Engliſh writers, that they, very lately, in their publick capacity, undertook *one* of this very author by ſubſcription. And if the editor hath not diſcharged his taſk with ſuitable abilities for one ſo much honoured by them, this was not their fault, but his, who thruſt himſelf into the employment. After ſuch an example, it would be weakening any defence to ſeek further for authorities. All that can be now decently urged, is the *reaſon of the thing*; and this I ſhall

do, more for the ſake of that truly venerable body than my own.

Of all the literary exercitations of ſpeculative men, whether deſigned for the uſe or entertainment of the world, there are none of ſo much importance or what are more our immediate concern, than thoſe which let us into the knowledge of our nature. Others may exerciſe the reaſon, or amuſe the imagination; but theſe only can improve the heart, and form the human mind to wiſdom. Now, in this ſcience, our Shakſpeare is confeſſed to occupy the foremoſt place; whether we conſider the amazing ſagacity with which he inveſtigates every hidden ſpring and wheel of human action; or his happy manner of communicating this knowledge, in the juſt and living paintings which he has given us of all our paſſions, appetites, and purſuits. Theſe afford a leſſon which can never be too often repeated, or too conſtantly inculcated; and, to engage the reader's due attention to it, hath been one of the principal objects of this edition.

As this ſcience (whatever profound philoſophers may think) is, to the reſt, *in things*; ſo, *in words*, (whatever ſupercilious pedants may talk) every one's mother tongue is to all other languages. This hath ſtill been the ſentiment of nature and true wiſdom. Hence, the greateſt men of antiquity never thought themſelves better employed, than in cultivating their own country idiom. So, Lycurgus did honour to Sparta, in giving the firſt complete edition of Homer; and Cicero to Rome, in correcting the works of Lucretius. Nor do we want examples of the ſame good ſenſe in modern times, even amidſt the cruel inroads that art and

faſhion have made upon nature and the ſimplicity of wiſdom. Menage, the greateſt name in France for all kinds of philologick learning, prided himſelf in writing critical notes on their beſt lyrick poet Malherbe: and our greater Selden, when he thought it might reflect credit on his country, did not diſdain even to comment a very ordinary poet, one Michael Drayton.[2] But the Engliſh tongue, at this juncture, deſerves and demands our particular regard. It hath, by means of the many excellent works of different kinds compoſed in it, engaged the notice, and become the ſtudy, of almoſt every curious and learned foreigner, ſo as to be thought even a part of literary accompliſhment. This muſt needs make it deſerving of a critical attention: and its being yet deſtitute of a teſt or ſtandard to apply to, in caſes of doubt or difficulty, ſhows how much it wants that attention. For we have neither GRAMMAR nor DICTIONARY, neither chart nor compaſs, to guide us through this wide ſea of words. And indeed how ſhould we? ſince both are to be compoſed and finiſhed on the authority of our beſt eſtabliſhed writers. But their authority can be of little uſe, till the text hath been correctly ſettled, and the phraſeology critically

[2] —— *our greater Selden, when he thought he might reflect credit on his country, did not diſdain to comment* a very ordinary poet, one Michael Drayton.] This compliment to himſelf for condeſcending to write notes on Shakſpeare, Warburton copied from Pope, who ſacrificed Drayton to gratify the vanity of this flattering editor: "I have a particular reaſon (ſays Pope in a Letter to Warburton) to make you intereſt yourſelf in me and my writings. It will cauſe both them and me to make a better figure to poſterity. '*A very mediocre poet, one Drayton, is yet taken notice of becauſe Selden writ a few notes on one of his Poems.*" Pope's *Works*, Vol. IX. p. 350, 8vo. 1751.

HOLT WHITE.

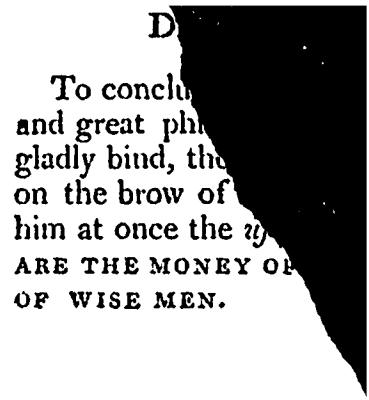
examined. As, then, by theſe aids, a *Grammar* and *Dictionary*, planned upon the beſt rules of logick and philoſophy (and none but ſuch will deſerve the name,) are to be procured; the forwarding of this will be a general concern: for, as Quintilian obſerves, "Verborum *proprietas* ac *differentia* omnibus, qui ſermonem curæ habent, debet eſſe communis." By this way, the Italians have brought their tongue to a degree of purity and ſtability, which no living language ever attained unto before. It is with pleaſure I obſerve, that theſe things now begin to be underſtood among ourſelves; and that I can acquaint the publick, we may ſoon expect very elegant editions of Fletcher and Milton's *Paradiſe Loſt*, from gentlemen of diſtinguiſhed abilities and learning. But this interval of good ſenſe, as it may be ſhort, is indeed but new. For I remember to have heard of a very learned man, who, not long ſince, formed a deſign, of giving a more correct edition of Spenſer; and, without doubt, would have performed it well; but he was diſſuaded from his purpoſe by his friends, as beneath the dignity of a profeſſor of the occult ſciences. Yet theſe very friends, I ſuppoſe, would have thought it added luſtre to his high ſtation, to have new-furbiſhed out ſome dull northern chronicle, or dark Sibylline ænigma. But let it not be thought that what is here ſaid inſinuates any thing to the diſcredit of Greek and Latin criticiſm. If the follies of particular men were ſufficient to bring any branch of learning into diſrepute, I do not know any that would ſtand in a worſe ſituation than that for which I now apologize. For I hardly think there ever appeared, in any *learned* language, ſo execrable a heap of nonſenſe, under the name of commentaries, as

hath been lately given us on a certain ſatyrick poet, of the laſt age, by his editor and coadjutor.[3]

I am ſenſible how unjuſtly the very beſt *claſsical* criticks have been treated. It is ſaid, that our great philoſopher[4] ſpoke with much contempt of the two fineſt ſcholars of this age, Dr. Bentley and Biſhop Hare, for ſquabbling, as he expreſſed it, about an old play-book; meaning, I ſuppoſe, Terence's comedies. But this ſtory is unworthy of him; though well enough ſuiting the fanatick turn of the wild writer that relates it; ſuch cenſures are amongſt the follies of men immoderately given over to one ſcience, and ignorantly undervaluing all the reſt. Thoſe learned criticks might, and perhaps did, laugh in their turn (though ſtill, ſure, with the ſame indecency and indiſcretion,) at that incomparable man, for wearing out a long life in poring through a teleſcope. Indeed, the weakneſſes of ſuch are to be mentioned with reverence. But who can bear, without indignation, the faſhionable cant of every trifling writer, whoſe inſipidity paſſes, with himſelf, for politeneſs, for pretending to be ſhocked, forſooth, with the rude and ſavage air of *vulgar* criticks; meaning ſuch as Muretus, Scaliger, Caſaubon, Salmaſius, Spanheim, Bentley! When, had it not been for the deathleſs labours of ſuch as theſe, the weſtern world, at the revival of letters, had ſoon fallen back again into a ſtate of ignorance and barbarity, as deplorable as that from which Providence had juſt redeemed it.

[3] This alludes to Dr. Grey's edition of *Hudibras* publiſhed in 1744. REED.

[4] Sir Iſaac Newton. See Whiſton's *Hiſtorical Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Clarke*, 1748, 8vo. p. 113. REED.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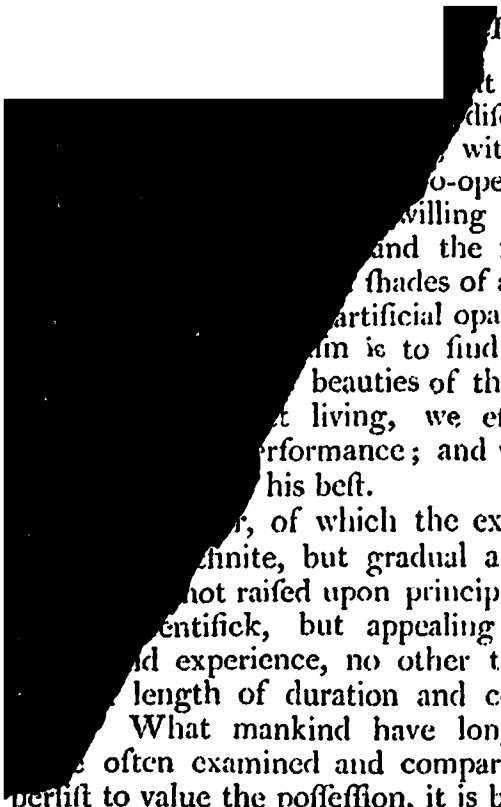
DR. JOHNS

PREFAC*

THAT praiſes are without reaſon laviſhe[illegible] dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by thoſe, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the hereſies of paradox; or thoſe, who, being forced by diſappointment upon conſolatory expedients, are willing to hope from poſterity what the preſent age refuſes, and flatter themſelves that the regard which is yet denied by envy, will be at laſt beſtowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries

* Firſt printed in 1765.



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What mankind have long poſſeſſed
often examined and compared, and if
perſiſt to value the poſſeſſion, it is becauſe fre-
quent compariſons have confirmed opinion in its fa-
vour. As among the works of nature no man can
properly call a river deep, or a mountain high, with-
out the knowledge of many mountains, and many
rivers; ſo in the production of genius, nothing
can be ſtyled excellent till it has been compared
with other works of the ſame kind. Demonſtra-
tion immediately diſplays its power, and has no-
thing to hope or fear from the flux of years; but
works tentative and experimental muſt be eſtimated
by their proportion to the general and collective
ability of man, as it is diſcovered in a long ſuc-
ceſſion of endeavours. Of the firſt building that
was raiſed, it might be with certainty determined

that it was round or ſquare; but whether it was ſpacious or lofty muſt have been referred to time. The Pythagorean ſcale of numbers was at once diſcovered to be perfect; but the poems of Homer we yet know not to tranſcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking, that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than tranſpoſe his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphraſe his ſentiments.

The reverence due to writings that have long ſubſiſted ariſes therefore not from any credulous confidence in the ſuperior wiſdom of paſt ages, or gloomy perſuaſion of the degeneracy of mankind, but is the conſequence of acknowledged and indubitable poſitions, that what has been longeſt known has been moſt conſidered, and what is moſt conſidered is beſt underſtood.

The poet, of whoſe works I have undertaken the reviſion, may now begin to aſſume the dignity of an ancient, and claim the privilege of an eſtabliſhed fame and preſcriptive veneration. He has long outlived his century,[6] the term commonly fixed as the teſt of literary merit. Whatever advantages he might once derive from perſonal alluſions, local cuſtoms, or temporary opinions, have for many years been loſt; and every topick of merriment or motive of ſorrow, which the modes of artificial life afforded him, now only obſcure the ſcenes which they once illuminated. The effects of favour and competition are at an end; the tradition of his friendſhips and his enmities has periſhed; his works ſupport no opinion with arguments, nor ſupply

[6] "Eſt vetus atque probus, centum qui perficit annos." *Hor.* STEEVENS.

any faction with invectives; they can neither indulge vanity, nor gratify malignity; but are read without any other reaſon than the deſire of pleaſure, and are therefore praiſed only as pleaſure is obtained; yet, thus unaſſiſted by intereſt or paſſion, they have paſt through variations of taſte and changes of manners, and, as they devolved from one generation to another, have received new honours at every tranſmiſſion.

But becauſe human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only the approbation of prejudice or faſhion; it is proper to inquire, by what peculiarities of excellence Shakſpeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen.

Nothing can pleaſe many, and pleaſe long, but juſt repreſentations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common fatiety of life ſends us all in queſt; the pleaſures of ſudden wonder are ſoon exhauſted, and the mind can only repoſe on the ſtability of truth.

Shakſpeare is above all writers, at leaſt above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the cuſtoms of particular places, unpractiſed by the reſt of the world; by the peculiarities of ſtudies or profeſſions, which can operate but upon ſmall numbers; or by the accidents of tranſient faſhions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, ſuch as the world will always ſupply, and obſervation will

always find. His perſons act and ſpeak by the influence of thoſe general paſſions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole ſyſtem of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in thoſe of Shakſpeare it is commonly a ſpecies.

It is from this wide extenſion of deſign that ſo much inſtruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakſpeare with practical axioms and domeſtick wiſdom. It was ſaid of Euripides, that every verſe was a precept; and it may be ſaid of Shakſpeare, that from his works may be collected a ſyſtem of civil and œconomical prudence. Yet his real power is not ſhown in the ſplendor of particular paſſages, but by the progreſs of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue; and he that tries to recommend him by ſelect quotations, will ſucceed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his houſe to ſale, carried a brick in his pocket as a ſpecimen.

It will not eaſily be imagined how much Shakſpeare excels in accommodating his ſentiments to real life, but by comparing him with other authors. It was obſerved of the ancient ſchools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the ſtudent diſqualified for the world, becauſe he found nothing there which he ſhould ever meet in any other place. The ſame remark may be applied to every ſtage but that of Shakſpeare. The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by ſuch characters as were never ſeen, converſing in a language which was never heard, upon topicks which will never ariſe in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often ſo evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is purſued with ſo

much eaſe and ſimplicity, that it ſeems ſcarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent ſelection out of common converſation, and common occurrences.

Upon every other ſtage the univerſal agent is love, by whoſe power all good and evil is diſtributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppoſitions of intereſt, and harraſs them with violence of deſires inconſiſtent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy and outrageous ſorrow; to diſtreſs them as nothing human ever was diſtreſſed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the buſineſs of a modern dramatiſt. For this, probability is violated, life is miſrepreſented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many paſſions, and as it has no great influence upon the ſum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he ſaw before him. He knew, that any other paſſion, as it was regular or exorbitant, was a cauſe of happineſs or calamity.

Characters thus ample and general were not eaſily diſcriminated and preſerved, yet perhaps no poet ever kept his perſonages more diſtinct from each other. I will not ſay with Pope, that every ſpeech may be aſſigned to the proper ſpeaker, becauſe many ſpeeches there are which have nothing characteriſtical; but, perhaps, though ſome may be equally adapted to every perſon, it will be difficult to find any that can be properly transferred from the preſent poſſeſſor to another claimant. The choice is right, when there is reaſon for choice.

Other dramatiſts can only gain attention by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf; and he that ſhould form his expectation of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakſpeare has no heroes; his ſcenes are occupied only by men, who act and ſpeak as the reader thinks that he ſhould himſelf have ſpoken or acted on the ſame occaſion: even where the agency is ſuper-natural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers diſguiſe the moſt natural paſſions and moſt frequent incidents; ſo that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world: Shakſpeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he repreſents will not happen, but if it were poſſible, its effects would probably be ſuch as he has aſſigned;[7] and it may be ſaid, that he has not only ſhown human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be expoſed.

This therefore is the praiſe of Shakſpeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raiſe up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecſtaſies, by reading human ſentiments in human language; by ſcenes from which a hermit may eſtimate the tranſactions of the world, and a confeſſor predict the progreſs of the paſſions.

7 "Quærit quod nuſquam eſt gentium, reperit tamen,
"Facit illud veriſimile quod mendacium eſt."
Plauti. *Pſeudolus*, Act I. ſc. iv. STEEVENS.

His adherence to general nature has expoſed him to the cenſure of criticks, who form their judgments upon narrower principles. Dennis and Rymer think his Romans not ſufficiently Roman; and Voltaire cenſures his kings as not completely royal. Dennis is offended, that Menenius a ſenator of Rome, ſhould play the buffoon; and Voltaire perhaps thinks decency violated when the Daniſh uſurper is repreſented as a drunkard. But Shakſpeare always makes nature predominate over accident; and if he preſerves the eſſential character, is not very careful of diſtinctions ſuperinduced and adventitious. His ſtory requires Romans or kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all diſpoſitions; and wanting a buffoon, he went into the ſenate-houſe for that which the ſenate-houſe would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to ſhow an uſurper and a murderer not only odious, but deſpicable; he therefore added drunkenneſs to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. Theſe are the petty cavils of petty minds; a poet overlooks the caſual diſtinction of country and condition, as a painter, ſatisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

The cenſure which he has incurred by mixing comick and tragick ſcenes, as it extends to all his works, deſerves more conſideration. Let the fact be firſt ſtated, and then examined.

Shakſpeare's plays are not in the rigorous and critical ſenſe either tragedies or comedies, but compoſitions of a diſtinct kind; exhibiting the real ſtate of ſublunary nature, which partakes of good and evil, joy and ſorrow, mingled with endleſs variety of proportion and innumerable modes of

combination; and expreſſing the courſe of the world, in which the loſs of one is the gain of another; in which, at the ſame time, the reveller is haſting to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend; in which the malignity of one is ſometimes defeated by the frolick of another; and many miſchiefs and many benefits are done and hindered without deſign.

Out of this chaos of mingled purpoſes and caſualties, the ancient poets, according to the laws which cuſtom had preſcribed, ſelected ſome the crimes of men, and ſome their abſurdities: ſome the momentous viciſſitudes of life, and ſome the lighter occurrences; ſome the terrors of diſtreſs, and ſome the gayeties of proſperity. Thus roſe the two modes of imitation, known by the names of *tragedy* and *comedy*, compoſitions intended to promote different ends by contrary means, and conſidered as ſo little allied, that I do not recollect among the Greeks or Romans a ſingle writer who attempted both.[8]

[8] From this remark it appears, that Dr. Johnſon was unacquainted with the *Cyclops* of Euripides.

It may, however, be obſerved, that Dr. Johnſon, perhaps, was miſled by the following paſſage in Dryden's *Eſſay on Dramatick Poeſy*: "Tragedies and Comedies were not writ then as they are now, promiſcuouſly, by the ſame perſon; but he who found his genius bending to the one, never attempted the other way. This is ſo plain, that I need not inſtance to you that Ariſtophanes, Plautus, Terence, never any of them writ a tragedy; Æſchylus, *Euripides*, *Sophocles*, and Seneca, never meddled with comedy: the ſock and buſkin were not worn by the ſame poet." And yet, to ſhow the uncertain ſtate of Dryden's memory, in his Dedication to his Juvenal he has expended at leaſt a page in deſcribing the *Cyclops* of Euripides.

So intimately connected with this ſubject are the following remarks of Mr. Twining in his excellent commentary on the

Shakſpeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and ſorrow not only in one mind, but in

Poetick of Ariſtotle, that they ought not to be withheld from our readers.

" The prejudiced admirers of the ancients are very angry at the leaſt inſinuation that *they* had any idea of our *barbarous* tragi-comedy. But, after all, it cannot be diſſembled, that, if they had not the *name*, they had the *thing*, or ſomething very nearly approaching to it. If that be tragi-comedy, which is partly ſerious and partly comical, I do not know why we ſhould ſcruple to ſay, that the *Alceſtis* of Euripides is, *to all intents and purpoſes*, a tragi-comedy. I have not the leaſt doubt, that it had upon an Athenian audience the proper *effect* of tragi-comedy; that is, that in ſome places it made them cry, and in others, laugh. And the beſt thing we have to hope, for the credit of Euripides, is, that he *intended* to produce this effect. For though he may be an unſkilful poet, who *purpoſes* to write a tragi-comedy, *he* ſurely is a more unſkilful poet, who writes one without knowing it.

" The learned reader will underſtand me to allude particularly to the ſcene, in which the domeſtick deſcribes the behaviour of Hercules; and to the ſpeech of Hercules himſelf, which follows. Nothing can well be of a more comick caſt than the ſervant's complaint. He deſcribes the hero as the moſt greedy and ill-mannered gueſt he had ever attended, under his maſter's hoſpitable roof; calling about him, eating, drinking, and *ſinging, in a room by himſelf*, while the maſter and all the family were in the height of funereal lamentation. He was not contented with ſuch refreſhments as had been ſet before him:

' ——— ἀτι σωφρονως ἐδεξατο
' Τα προστυχοντα ξενια ——
' Αλλ' ἐι τι μη φερσιμεν, ΩΤΡΥΝΕΝ φερειν.'

Then he drinks—

' Ἑως ἐδερμην' ἀυτον ἀμφιβασα φλοξ
' Οινῳ ———'

—crowns himſelf with myrtle, and ſings, ΑΜΟΥΣ' ΤΑΛΚΤΩΝ—and all this, alone. ' Cette deſcription,' ſays Fontenelle, ' eſt ſi burleſque, qu'on diroit d'un crocheteur qui eſt de confrairie.' A cenſure ſomewhat juſtified by Euripides himſelf, who makes the ſervant take Hercules for a *thief*:

' ——πανεργον ΚΑΩΠΑ και ΛΗΙΣΤΗΝ τινα.'

" The ſpeech of Hercules, φιλοσοφεντος ἐν μεθῃ, as the ſcholiaſt obſerves (v. 776,) ' philoſophizing in his cups,' is ſtill more

one compoſition. Almoſt all his plays are divided between ſerious and ludicrous characters, and, in

curious. It is, indeed, full of the φλοξ οινε, and completely juſtifies the attendant's deſcription. Nothing can be more *jolly*. It is in the true ſpirit of a modern drinking ſong; recommending it to the ſervant to uncloud his brow, enjoy the preſent hour, think nothing of the morrow, and drown his cares in *love* and *wine*:

'ΟΥΤΟΣ——τι σεμνον και περφροντικον βλεπεις;
'Ου χρη σκυθρωπον, κ. τ. αλ.

'ΔΕΥΡ' 'ΕΛΘ', οπως αν και σοφωτερος γενη.
'Τα θνητα πραγματ' οιδας ην εχει φυσιν;
'ΟΙΜΑΙ μεν 'ΟΥ· ΠΟΘΕΝ ΓΑΡ;—αλλ' ακουε μη.
'Βροτοις απασι κατθανειν οφειλεται,
'Κ' ουκ εστι θνητων οστις εξεπιλαται
'Την αυριον μελλουσαν ει βιωσεται.

'Ευφραινε σαυτον· ΠΙΝΕ!—τον καθ ημεραν
'Βιον λογιζου σον, τα δ'αλλα, της τυχης.
'Τιμα δε και την πλειστον ηδιστην θεων
'ΚΥΠΡΙΝ βροτοισιν—— κ. τ. λ.' V. 783—812.

"If any man can read this, without ſuppoſing it to have *ſet* the audience in a *roar*, I certainly cannot demonſtrate that he is miſtaken. I can only ſay, that I think he muſt be a very grave man himſelf, and muſt forget that the Athenians were not a very grave people. The zeal of Pere Brumoy in defending this tragedy, betrays him into a little indiſcretion. He ſays, 'tout cela à fait penſer à quelques critiques modernes que cette piece etoit une tragi-comedie; chimere inconnu aux anciens. Cette piece *eſt du gout des autres tragedies antiques*.' Indeed they, who call this play a tragi-comedy, give it rather a favourable name; for, in the ſcenes alluded to, it is, in fact, of a lower ſpecies than our tragi-comedy: it is rather *burleſque tragedy*; what Demetrius calls τραγωδια παιζουσα. Much of the comick caſt prevails in other ſcenes; though mixed with thoſe genuine ſtrokes of ſimple and univerſal nature, which abound in this poet, and which I ſhould be ſorry to exchange for that monotonous and unaffecting level of tragick dignity, which never falls, and never riſes.

"I will only mention one more inſtance of this tragi-comick mixture, and that from Sophocles. The dialogue between Mi-

the ſucceſſive evolutions of the deſign, ſometimes produce ſerioufneſs and ſorrow, and ſometimes levity and laughter.

nerva and Ulyſſes, in the firſt ſcene of the *Ajax*, from v. 74 to 88, is perfectly ludicrous. The cowardice of Ulyſſes is almoſt as comick as the cowardice of Falſtaff. In ſpite of the preſence of Minerva, and her previous aſſurance that ſhe would effectually guard him from all danger by rendering him inviſible, when ſhe calls Ajax out, Ulyſſes, in the utmoſt trepidation, exclaims—

'Τι δρας, Αθανα; μηδαμως σ' εξω καλει.'

'What are you about, Minerva?—by no means call him out' Minerva anſwers—

'Ου σιγ' ανεξη, μηδε δειλιαν αφεις;'

'Will you not be ſilent, and lay aſide your fears?'

But Ulyſſes cannot conquer his fears:—

'ΜΗ, ΠΡΟΣ ΘΕΩΝ——αλλ' ενδον αρκειτω μενων.'

'Don't call him out, for heaven's ſake:—let him ſtay within.' And in this tone the converſation continues; till, upon Minerva's repeating her promiſe that Ajax ſhould not ſee him, he conſents to ſtay; but in a line of moſt comical reluctance, and with an *aſide*, that is in the true ſpirit of Sancho Panza:—

'Μενοιμ' αν· ΗΘΕΛΟΝ Δ'ΑΝ ΕΚΤΟΣ ΩΝ ΤΥΧΕΙΝ.'

'I'll ſtay—(*aſide*) but I wiſh I was not here.'

'J'avoue,' ſays Brumoy, 'que ce trait n'eſt pas à la louange d'Ulyſſe, ni de Sophocle.'

"No unprejudiced perſon, I think, can read this ſcene without being convinced, not only, that it muſt actually have produced, but that it muſt have been *intended* to produce, the effect of comedy.

"It appears indeed to me, that we may plainly trace in the Greek tragedy, with all its improvements, and all its beauties, pretty ſtrong marks of its popular and *tragi-comick* origin. For Τραγωδια, we are told, was, originally, the only dramatick appellation; and when, afterwards, the *ludicrous* was ſeparated from the *ſerious*, and diſtinguiſhed by its appropriated name of *Comedy*, the ſeparation ſeems to have been imperfectly made, and *Tragedy*, diſtinctively ſo called, ſtill ſeems to have retained a tincture of its original merriment. Nor will this appear ſtrange, if we conſider the popular nature of the Greek ſpectacles. The *people*, it is probable, would ſtill require, even in the midſt of their tragick emotion, a little *daſh* of their old ſatyrick *fun*, and poets were obliged to comply, in ſome degree, with their taſte." *Twining's Notes*, pp. 202, 203, 204, 205, 206.

STEEVENS.

That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticiſm will be readily allowed; but there is always an appeal open from criticiſm to nature. The end of writing is to inſtruct; the end of poetry is to inſtruct by pleaſing. That the mingled drama may convey all the inſtruction of tragedy or comedy cannot be denied, becauſe it includes both in its alternations of exhibition, and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life, by ſhowing how great machinations and ſlender deſigns may promote or obviate one another, and the high and the low co-operate in the general ſyſtem by unavoidable concatenation.

It is objected, that by this change of ſcenes the paſſions are interrupted in their progreſſion, and that the principal event, being not advanced by a due gradation of preparatory incidents, wants at laſt the power to move, which conſtitutes the perfection of dramatick poetry. This reaſoning is ſo ſpecious, that it is received as true even by thoſe who in daily experience feel it to be falſe. The interchanges of mingled ſcenes ſeldom fail to produce the intended viciſſitudes of paſſion. Fiction cannot move ſo much, but that the attention may be eaſily transferred; and though it muſt be allowed that pleaſing melancholy be ſometimes interrupted by unwelcome levity, yet let it be conſidered likewiſe, that melancholy is often not pleaſing, and that the diſturbance of one man may be the relief of another; that different auditors have different habitudes; and that, upon the whole, all pleaſure conſiſts in variety.

The players, who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, hiſtories, and tragedies, ſeem not to have diſtinguiſhed the three kinds, by any very exact or definite ideas.

An action which ended happily to the principal perſons, however ſerious or diſtreſsful through its intermediate incidents, in their opinion conſtituted a comedy. This idea of a comedy continued long amongſt us, and plays were written, which, by changing the cataſtrophe, were tragedies to-day, and comedies to-morrow.[9]

Tragedy was not in thoſe times a poem of more general dignity or elevation than comedy; it required only a calamitous concluſion, with which the common criticiſm of that age was ſatisfied, whatever lighter pleaſure it afforded in its progreſs.

Hiſtory was a ſeries of actions, with no other than chronological ſucceſſion, independent on each other, and without any tendency to introduce and regulate the concluſion. It is not always very nicely diſtinguiſhed from tragedy. There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*, than in the hiſtory of *Richard the Second*. But a hiſtory might be continued through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.

Through all theſe denominations of the drama, Shakſpeare's mode of compoſition is the ſame; an interchange of ſerioufneſs and merriment, by which the mind is ſoftened at one time, and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpoſe, whether to gladden or depreſs, or to conduct the ſtory, without vehemence or emotion, through tracts of eaſy and familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his

[9] Thus, ſays Downes the Prompter, p. 22: "The tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* was made ſome time after [1662] into a tragi-comedy, by Mr. James Howard, he preſerving Romeo and Juliet alive; ſo that when the tragedy was revived again, 'twas play'd alternately, tragical one day, and tragi-comical another, for ſeveral days together." STEEVENS.

purpoſe; as he commands us, we laugh or mourn, or ſit ſilent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference.

When Shakſpeare's plan is underſtood, moſt of the criticiſms of Rymer and Voltaire vaniſh away. The play of *Hamlet* is opened, without impropriety, by two centinels; Iago bellows at Brabantio's window, without injury to the ſcheme of the play, though in terms which a modern audience would not eaſily endure; the character of Polonius is ſeaſonable and uſeful; and the Gravediggers themſelves may be heard with applauſe.

Shakſpeare engaged in dramatick poetry with the world open before him; the rules of the ancients were yet known to few; the publick judgment was unformed; he had no example of ſuch fame as might force him upon imitation, nor criticks of ſuch authority as might reſtrain his extravagance: he therefore indulged his natural diſpoſition, and his diſpoſition, as Rymer has remarked, led him to comedy. In tragedy he often writes with great appearance of toil and ſtudy, what is written at laſt with little felicity; but in his comick ſcenes, he ſeems to produce without labour, what no labour can improve. In tragedy he is always ſtruggling after ſome occaſion to be comick, but in comedy he ſeems to repoſe, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature. In his tragick ſcenes there is always ſomething wanting, but his comedy often ſurpaſſes expectation or deſire. His comedy pleaſes by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy for the greater part by incident and action. His tragedy ſeems to be ſkill, his comedy to be inſtinct.[1]

[1] In the rank and order of geniuſes it muſt, I think, be allowed, that the writer of good tragedy is ſuperior. And there-

The force of his comick ſcenes has ſuffered little diminution from the changes made by a century and a half, in manners or in words. As his perſonages act upon principles ariſing from genuine paſſion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleaſures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are natural, and therefore durable; the adventitious peculiarities of perſonal habits, are only ſuperficial dies, bright and pleaſing for a little while, yet ſoon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former luſtre; and the diſcrimination of true paſſion are the colours of nature; they pervade the whole maſs, and can only periſh with the body that exhibits them. The accidental compoſitions of heterogeneous modes are diſſolved by the chance that combined them; but the uniform ſimplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increaſe, nor ſuffers decay. The ſand heaped by one flood is ſcattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The ſtream of time, which is continually waſhing the diſſoluble fabricks of other poets, paſſes without injury by the adamant of Shakſpeare.

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a ſtyle which never becomes obſolete, a certain mode of phraſeology ſo conſonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its reſpective language, as to remain ſettled and unaltered: this ſtyle is probably to be ſought in the common intercourſe of life, among thoſe who ſpeak only to be underſtood, without ambition of elegance.

fore, I think the opinion, which I am ſorry to perceive gains ground, that Shakſpeare's chief and predominant talent lay in comedy, tends to leſſen the unrivalled excellence of our divine bard. J. WARTON.

See Vol. XIX. p. 529, for Philips's remark on this ſubject. STEEVENS.

The polite are always catching modiſh innovations, and the learned depart from eſtabliſhed forms of ſpeech, in hope of finding or making better; thoſe who wiſh for diſtinction forſake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a converſation above groſſneſs and below refinement, where propriety reſides, and where this poet ſeems to have gathered his comick dialogue. He is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the preſent age than any other author equally remote, and among his other excellencies deſerves to be ſtudied as one of the original maſters of our language.

Theſe obſervations are to be conſidered not as unexceptionably conſtant, but as containing general and predominant truth. Shakſpeare's familiar dialogue is affirmed to be ſmooth and clear, yet not wholly without ruggedneſs or difficulty; as a country may be eminently fruitful, though it has ſpots unfit for cultivation: his characters are praiſed as natural, though their ſentiments are ſometimes forced, and their actions improbable; as the earth upon the whole is ſpherical, though its ſurface is varied with protuberances and cavities.

Shakſpeare with his excellencies has likewiſe faults, and faults ſufficient to obſcure and overwhelm any other merit. I ſhall ſhow them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or ſuperſtitious veneration. No queſtion can be more innocently diſcuſſed than a dead poet's pretenſions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which ſets candour higher than truth.

His firſt defect is that to which may be imputed moſt of the evil in books or in men. He ſacrifices virtue to convenience, and is ſo much more careful to pleaſe than to inſtruct, that he ſeems to write

without any moral purpoſe. From his writings indeed a ſyſtem of ſocial duty may be ſelected, for he that thinks reaſonably muſt think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop caſually from him; he makes no juſt diſtribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to ſhow in the virtuous a diſapprobation of the wicked; he carries his perſons indifferently through right and wrong, and at the cloſe diſmiſſes them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and juſtice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often ſo looſely formed, that a very ſlight conſideration may improve them, and ſo careleſsly purſued, that he ſeems not always fully to comprehend his own deſign. He omits opportunities of inſtructing or delighting, which the train of his ſtory ſeems to force upon him, and apparently rejects thoſe exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the ſake of thoſe which are more eaſy.

It may be obſerved, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himſelf near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he ſhortened the labour to ſnatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he ſhould moſt vigorouſly exert them, and his cataſtrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly repreſented.

He had no regard to diſtinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without ſcruple, the cuſtoms, inſtitutions, and opinions of another, at the expence not only of likelihood, but of poſſibility. Theſe faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal than judgment, to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Hector

quoting Ariſtotle, when we ſee the loves of Theſeus and Hippolyta combined with the Gothick mythology of fairies. Shakſpeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology, for in the ſame age Sidney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his *Arcadia*, confounded the paſtoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and ſecurity, with thoſe of turbulence, violence, and adventure.[2]

In his comick ſcenes he is ſeldom very ſucceſsful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of ſmartneſs and conteſts of ſarcaſm; their jeſts are commonly groſs, and their pleaſantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he repreſented the real converſation of

[2] As a further extenuation of Shakſpeare's error, it may be urged that he found the Gothick mythology of Fairies already incorporated with Greek and Roman ſtory, by our early tranſlators. Phaer and Golding, who firſt gave us Virgil and Ovid in an Engliſh dreſs, introduce Fairies almoſt as often as Nymphs are mentioned in theſe claſſick authors. Thus, Homer, in his 24th *Iliad*:

"Ἐν Σιπύλῳ, ὅθι φασὶ θεάων ἔμμεναι εὐνὰς
"ΝΥΜΦΑΩΝ, αἵτ' ἀμφ' Ἀχελῆϊον ἐρρώσαντο."

But Chapman tranſlates—

"In Sypilus——in that place where 'tis ſaid
"The goddeſſe *Fairies* uſe to dance about the funeral bed
"Of Achelous:————."

Neither are our ancient verſifiers leſs culpable on the ſcore of anachroniſms. Under their hands the *baliſta* becomes a *cannon*, and other modern inſtruments are perpetually ſubſtituted for ſuch as were the produce of the remoteſt ages.

It may be added, that in Arthur Hall's verſion of the fourth *Iliad*, Juno ſays to Jupiter:

"——the time will come that *Totnam French* ſhal turn."

And in the tenth Book we hear of "*The Baſtile*," "*Lemſter* wooll," and "The *Byble*." STEEVENS.

his time is not eaſy to determine; the reign of Elizabeth is commonly ſuppoſed to have been a time of ſtateline ſs, formality, and reſerve, yet perhaps the relaxations of that ſeverity were not very elegant. There muſt, however, have been always ſome modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to chooſe the beſt.

In tragedy his performance ſeems conſtantly to be worſe, as his labour is more. The effuſions of paſſion, which exigence forces out, are for the moſt part ſtriking and energetick; but whenever he ſolicits his invention, or ſtrains his faculties, the offſpring of his throes is tumour, meanneſs, tediouſneſs, and obſcurity.

In narration he affects a diſproportionate pomp of diction, and a wearieſome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatick poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obſtructs the progreſs of the action; it ſhould therefore always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakſpeare found it an incumbrance, and inſtead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and ſplendour.

His declamations or ſet ſpeeches are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragick writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and inſtead of inquiring what the occaſion demanded, to ſhow how much his ſtores of knowledge could ſupply, he ſeldom eſcapes without the pity or reſentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy ſentiment, which he can-

not well expreſs, and will not reject; he ſtruggles with it a while, and if it continues ſtubborn, compriſes it in words ſuch as occur, and leaves it to be diſentangled and evolved by thoſe who have more leiſure to beſtow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate, the thought is ſubtle, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the equality of words to things is very often neglected, and trivial ſentiments and vulgar ideas diſappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by ſonorous epithets and ſwelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have moſt reaſon to complain when he approaches neareſt to his higheſt excellence, and ſeems fully reſolved to ſink them in dejection, and molliſy them with tender emotions by the fall of greatneſs, the danger of innocence, or the croſſes of love. What he does beſt, he ſoon ceaſes to do. He is not long ſoft and pathetick without ſome idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no ſooner begins to move, than he counteracts himſelf; and terror and pity, as they are riſing in the mind, are checked and blaſted by ſudden *frigidity*.

A quibble is to Shakſpeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller; he follows it at all adventures; it is ſure to lead him out of his way, and ſure to engulf him in the mire. It has ſome malignant power over his mind, and its faſcinations are irreſiſtible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his diſquiſitions, whether he be enlarging knowledge, or exalting affection, whether he be amuſing attention with incidents, or enchaining it in ſuſpenſe, let but a quibble ſpring up before him, and he leaves his work unfiniſhed. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aſide from his ca-

reer, or ſtoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him ſuch delight, that he was content to purchaſe it by the ſacrifice of reaſon, propriety, and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he loſt the world, and was content to loſe it.

It will be thought ſtrange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of thoſe laws which have been inſtituted and eſtabliſhed by the joint authority of poets and of criticks.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I reſign him to critical juſtice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which muſt be indulged to all human excellence; that his virtues be rated with his failings: but, from the cenſure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I ſhall, with due reverence to that learning which I muſt oppoſe, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His hiſtories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not ſubject to any of their laws; nothing more is neceſſary to all the praiſe which they expect, than that the changes of action be ſo prepared as to be underſtood, that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters conſiſtent, natural, and diſtinct. No other unity is intended, and therefore none is to be ſought.

In his other works he has well enough preſerved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly perplexed and regularly unravelled; he does not endeavour to hide his deſign only to diſcover it, for this is ſeldom the order of real events, and Shakſpeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly what Ariſtotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is

concatenated with another, and the conclusion follows by easy consequence. There are perhaps some incidents that might be spared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the stage; but the general system makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place[3] he has shown no regard; and perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they stand will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received, by discovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor.

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The criticks hold it impossible, that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, shall lament the untimely fall of his son. The mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its

[3] ——unities *of* time *and* place—] Mr. Twining, among his judicious remarks on the poetick of Aristotle, observes, that "with respect to the strict unities of *time* and *place*, no such rules were imposed on the Greek poets by the criticks, or by themselves; nor are imposed on *any* poet, either by the *nature*, or the *end*, of the dramatick imitation itself."

Aristotle does not express a single precept concerning unity of *place*. This supposed restraint originated from the hypercriticism of his French commentators. STEEVENS.

force when it departs from the reſemblance of reality.

From the narrow limitation of time neceſſarily ariſes the contraction of place. The ſpectator, who knows that he ſaw the firſt Act at Alexandria, cannot ſuppoſe that he ſees the next at Rome, at a diſtance to which not the dragons of Medea could, in ſo ſhort a time, have tranſported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itſelf; that what was a houſe cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Perſepolis.

Such is the triumphant language with which a critick insults over the miſery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without reſiſtance or reply. It is time therefore to tell him, by the authority of Shakſpeare, that he aſſumes, as an unqueſtionable principle, a poſition, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his underſtanding pronounces to be falſe. It is falſe, that any repreſentation is miſtaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a ſingle moment, was ever credited.

The objection ariſing from the impoſſibility of paſſing the firſt hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, ſuppoſes, that when the play opens, the ſpectator really imagines himſelf at Alexandria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the ſtage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Deluſion, if deluſion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the ſpectator can be once

perſuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæſar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharſalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a ſtate of elevation above the reach of reaſon, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may deſpiſe the circumſcriptions of terreſtrial nature. There is no reaſon why a mind thus wandering in ecſtaſy ſhould count the clock, or why an hour ſhould not be a century in that calenture of the brains that can make the ſtage a field.

The truth is,[4] that the ſpectators are always in their ſenſes, and know, from the firſt Act to the laſt, that the ſtage is only a ſtage, and that the players are only players. They come to hear a certain number of lines recited with juſt geſture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to ſome action, and an action muſt be in ſome place; but the different actions that complete a ſtory may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the abſurdity of allowing that ſpace to repreſent firſt Athens, and then Sicily, which was always known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre?

By ſuppoſition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapſes for the moſt part between the acts; for, of ſo much

[4] So in the Epiſtle Dedicatory to Dryden's *Love Triumphant*: "They who will not allow this liberty to a poet, make it a very ridiculous thing, for an audience to ſuppoſe themſelves ſometimes to be in a field, ſometimes in a garden, and at other times in a chamber. There are not, indeed, ſo many abſurdities in their ſuppoſition, as in ours; but 'tis an original abſurdity for the audience to ſuppoſe themſelves to be in any other place, than in the very *theatre* in which they ſit; which is neither a chamber, nor garden, nor yet a publick place of any buſineſs but that of the repreſentation." STEEVENS.

of the action as is repreſented, the real and poetical duration is the ſame. If, in the firſt Act, preparations for war againſt Mithridates are repreſented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without abſurdity, be repreſented, in the cataſtrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama exhibits ſucceſſive imitations of ſucceſſive actions, and why may not the ſecond imitation repreſent an action that happened years after the firſt; if it be ſo connected with it, that nothing but time can be ſuppoſed to intervene? Time is, of all modes of exiſtence, moſt obſequious to the imagination; a lapſe of years is as eaſily conceived as a paſſage of hours. In contemplation we eaſily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only ſee their imitation.

It will be aſked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited with all the credit due to a drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a juſt picture of a real original; as repreſenting to the auditor what he would himſelf feel, if he were to do or ſuffer what is there feigned to be ſuffered or to be done. The reflection that ſtrikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourſelves may be expoſed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourſelves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the poſſibility than ſuppoſe the preſence of miſery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when ſhe remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our conſciouſneſs of fic-

tion; if we thought murders and treaſons real, they would pleaſe no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleaſure, not becauſe they are miſtaken for realities, but becauſe they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landſcape, the trees are not ſuppoſed capable to give us ſhade, or the fountains coolneſs; but we conſider, how we ſhould be pleaſed with ſuch fountains playing beſide us, and ſuch woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the hiſtory of *Henry the Fifth*, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increaſe or diminiſh its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always leſs. The humour of Petruchio may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what geſture can hope to add dignity or force to the ſoliloquy of Cato?

A play read, affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not ſuppoſed to be real; and it follows, that between the Acts a longer or ſhorter time may be allowed to paſs, and that no more account of ſpace or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may paſs in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakſpeare knew the unities, and rejected them by deſign, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impoſſible to decide, and uſeleſs to enquire. We may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that, when he roſe to notice, he did not want the counſels and admonitions of ſcholars and criticks, and that he at laſt deliberately perſiſted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance.

As nothing is eſſential to the fable, but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place ariſe evidently from falſe aſſumptions, and, by circumſcribing the extent of the drama, leſſen its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented, that they were not known by him, or not obſerved: nor, if ſuch another poet could ariſe, ſhould I very vehemently reproach him, that his firſt Act paſſed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules merely poſitive, become the comprehenſive genius of Shakſpeare, and ſuch cenſures are ſuitable to the minute and ſlender criticiſm of Voltaire:

> "Non uſque adeo permiſcuit imis
> "Longus ſumma dies, ut non, ſi voce Metelli
> "Serventur leges, malint a Cæſare tolli."

Yet when I ſpeak thus ſlightly of dramatick rules, I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced againſt me; before ſuch authorities I am afraid to ſtand, not that I think the preſent queſtion one of thoſe that are to be decided by mere authority, but becauſe it is to be ſuſpected, that theſe precepts have not been ſo eaſily received, but for better reaſons than I have yet been able to find. The reſult of my inquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boaſt of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not eſſential to a juſt drama, that though they may ſometimes conduce to pleaſure, they are always to be ſacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and inſtruction; and that a play, written with nice obſervation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curioſity, as the product of ſuperfluous and oſtentatious art, by which is ſhown, rather what is poſſible, than what is neceſſary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, ſhall preſerve all the unities unbroken, deſerves the like applauſe with the architect, who ſhall diſplay all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its ſtrength; but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy; and the greateſt graces of a play are to copy nature, and inſtruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recall the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almoſt frighted at my own temerity; and when I eſtimate the fame and the ſtrength of thoſe that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to ſink down in reverential ſilence; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he ſaw Neptune ſhaking the wall, and Juno heading the beſiegers.

Thoſe whom my arguments cannot perſuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakſpeare, will eaſily, if they conſider the condition of his life, make ſome allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly eſtimated, muſt be compared to the ſtate of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to a reader a book be not worſe or better for the circumſtances of the author, yet as there is always a ſilent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the enquiry, how far man may extend his deſigns, or how high he may rate his native force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we ſhall place any particular performance, curioſity is always buſy to diſcover the inſtruments, as well as to ſurvey the workmanſhip, to know how much is to be aſcribed to original powers, and how much to caſual and adven-

titious help. The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houſes of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with aſtoniſhment, who remembered that they were built without the uſe of iron?

The Engliſh nation, in the time of Shakſpeare, was yet ſtruggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been tranſplanted hither in the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the learned languages had been ſucceſsfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Aſcham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal ſchools; and thoſe who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and Spaniſh poets. But literature was yet confined to profeſſed ſcholars, or to men and women of high rank. The publick was groſs and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accompliſhment ſtill valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people newly awakened to literary curioſity, being yet unacquainted with the true ſtate of things, knows not how to judge of that which is propoſed as its reſemblance. Whatever is remote from common appearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childiſh credulity; and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The ſtudy of thoſe who then aſpired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. *The Death of Arthur* was the favourite volume.

The mind, which has feaſted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taſte of the inſipidity of truth. A play, which imitated only the common

occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of *Palmerin* and *Guy of Warwich*, have made little impreſſion; he that wrote for ſuch an audience was under the neceſſity of looking round for ſtrange events and fabulous tranſactions, and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings, to unſkilful curioſity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he choſe the moſt popular, ſuch as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of the drama, had they not held the thread of the ſtory in their hands.

The ſtories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were in his time acceſſible and familiar. The fable of *As you like it*, which is ſuppoſed to be copied from Chaucer's *Gamelyn*, was a little pamphlet of thoſe times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of *Hamlet* in plain Engliſh proſe, which the criticks have now to ſeek in *Saxo Grammaticus*.

His Engliſh hiſtories he took from Engliſh chronicles and Engliſh ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by verſions, they ſupplied him with new ſubjects; he dilated ſome of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been tranſlated by North.

His plots, whether hiſtorical or fabulous, are always crouded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more eaſily caught than by ſentiment or argumentation; and ſuch is the power of the marvellous, even over thoſe who deſpiſe it, that every man finds his mind more ſtrongly ſeized by the tragedies of Shakſpeare than of any other

writer; others pleaſe us by particular ſpeeches, but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has perhaps excelled all but Homer in ſecuring the firſt purpoſe of a writer, by exciting reſtleſs and unquenchable curioſity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The ſhows and buſtle with which his plays abound have the ſame original. As knowledge advances, pleaſure paſſes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Thoſe to whom our author's labours were exhibited had more ſkill in pomps or proceſſions than in poetical language, and perhaps wanted ſome viſible and diſcriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he ſhould moſt pleaſe; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his example has prejudiced the nation, we ſtill find that on our ſtage ſomething muſt be done as well as ſaid, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however muſical or elegant, paſſionate or ſublime.

Voltaire expreſſes his wonder, that our author's extravagancies are endured by a nation, which has ſeen the tragedy of *Cato*. Let him be anſwered, that Addiſon ſpeaks the language of poets, and Shakſpeare, of men. We find in *Cato* innumerable beauties which enamour us of its author, but we ſee nothing that acquaints us with human ſentiments or human actions; we place it with the faireſt and the nobleſt progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but *Othello* is the vigorous and vivacious offſpring of obſervation impregnated by genius. *Cato* affords a ſplendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers juſt and noble ſentiments, in diction eaſy, elevated, and harmonious, but its

hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the compoſition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of *Cato*, but we think on *Addiſon*.[5]

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with ſhades, and ſcented with flowers: the compoſition of Shakſpeare is a foreſt, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air, interſperſed ſometimes with weeds and brambles, and ſometimes giving ſhelter to myrtles and to roſes; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endleſs diverſity. Other poets diſplay cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finiſhed, wrought into ſhape, and poliſhed into brightneſs. Shakſpeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in unexhauſtible plenty, though clouded by incruſtations, debaſed by impurities, and mingled with a maſs of meaner minerals.

It has been much diſputed, whether Shakſpeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of ſcholaſtick education, the precepts of critical ſcience, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakſpeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much ſkill in the dead languages. Jonſon, his friend, affirms, that *he had ſmall Latin, and leſs Greek*; who, beſides that he had no imaginable temptation to falſehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquiſitions of Shakſpeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought there-

[5] See Mr. Twining's commentary on Ariſtotle, note 51. STEEVENS.

fore to decide the controverſy, unleſs ſome teſtimony of equal force could be oppoſed.

Some have imagined, that they have diſcovered deep learning in imitation of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged, were drawn from books tranſlated in his time; or were ſuch eaſy coincidencies of thought, as will happen to all who conſider the ſame ſubjects; or ſuch remarks on life or axioms of morality as float in converſation, and are tranſmitted through the world in proverbial ſentences.

I have found it remarked, that, in this important ſentence, *Go before, I'll follow*, we read a tranſlation of, *I prae ſequar*. I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleaſing dream, ſays, *I cried to ſleep again*, the author imitates Anacreon, who had, like every other man, the ſame wiſh on the ſame occaſion.

There are a few paſſages which may paſs for imitations, but ſo few, that the exception only confirms the rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication, and as he uſed what he had, would have uſed more if he had obtained it.

The *Comedy of Errors* is confeſſedly taken from the *Menæchmi* of *Plautus*; from the only play of Plautus which was then in Engliſh. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that, would have copied more; but that thoſe which were not tranſlated were inacceſſible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have ſome French ſcenes proves but little; he might eaſily procure them to be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without aſſiſtance. In the

ſtory of *Romeo and Juliet* he is obſerved to have followed the Engliſh tranſlation, where it deviates from the Italian; but this on the other part proves nothing againſt his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himſelf, but what was known to his audience.

It is moſt likely that he had learned Latin ſufficiently to make him acquainted with conſtruction, but that he never advanced to an eaſy peruſal of the Roman authors. Concerning his ſkill in modern languages, I can find no ſufficient ground of determination; but as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been diſcovered, though the Italian poetry was then in high eſteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than Engliſh, and choſe for his fables only ſuch tales as he found tranſlated.

That much knowledge is ſcattered over his works is very juſtly obſerved by Pope, but it is often ſuch knowledge as books did not ſupply. He that will underſtand Shakſpeare, muſt not be content to ſtudy him in the cloſet, he muſt look for his meaning ſometimes among the ſports of the field, and ſometimes among the manufactures of the ſhop.

There is, however, proof enough that he was a very diligent reader, nor was our language then ſo indigent of books, but that he might very liberally indulge his curioſity without excurſion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were tranſlated, and ſome of the Greek; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; moſt of the topicks of human diſquiſition had found Engliſh writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but ſucceſs. This was a ſtock of knowledge ſufficient for a

mind ſo capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the Engliſh ſtage in a ſtate of the utmoſt rudeneſs; no eſſays either in tragedy or comedy had appeared, from which it could be diſcovered to what degree of delight either one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet underſtood. Shakſpeare may be truly ſaid to have introduced them both amongſt us, and in ſome of his happier ſcenes to have carried them both to the utmoſt height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not eaſily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unſettled. Rowe is of opinion, that *perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like thoſe of other writers, in his leaſt perfect works; art had ſo little, and nature ſo large a ſhare in what he did, that for aught I know*, ſays he, *the performances of his youth, as they were the moſt vigorous, were the beſt.* But the power of nature is only the power of uſing to any certain purpoſe the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity ſupplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and when images are collected by ſtudy and experience, can only aſſiſt in combining or applying them. Shakſpeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and as he muſt encreaſe his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquiſition, he, like them, grew wiſer as he grew older, could diſplay life better, as he knew it more, and inſtruct with more efficacy, as he was himſelf more amply inſtructed.

There is a vigilance of obſervation and accuracy of diſtinction which books and precepts cannot

confer; from this almoſt all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakſpeare muſt have looked upon mankind with perſpicacity, in the higheſt degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diverſify them only by the accidental appendages of preſent manners; the dreſs is a little varied, but the body is the ſame. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in Engliſh, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which ſhowed life in its native colours.

The conteſt about the original benevolence or malignity of man had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyſe the mind, to trace the paſſions to their ſources, to unfold the ſeminal principles of vice and virtue, or ſound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All thoſe enquiries, which from that time that human nature became the faſhionable ſtudy, have been made ſometimes with nice diſcernment, but often with idle ſubtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the infancy of learning was ſatisfied, exhibited only the ſuperficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the cauſes, and were formed for ſuch as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be ſtudied in the cloſet; he that would know the world, was under the neceſſity of gleaning his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its buſineſs and amuſements.

Boyle congratulated himſelf upon his high birth, becauſe it favoured his curioſity, by facilitating his acceſs. Shakſpeare had no ſuch advantage; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works

of genius and learning have been performed in ſtates of life that appear very little favourable to thought or to enquiry; ſo many, that he who conſiders them is inclined to think that he ſees enterprize and perſeverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vaniſh before them. The genius of Shakſpeare was not to be depreſſed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow converſation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were ſhaken from his mind, *as dew-drops from a lion's mane.*

Though he had ſo many difficulties to encounter, and ſo little aſſiſtance to ſurmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many caſts of native diſpoſitions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice diſtinctions; and to ſhow them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has himſelf been imitated by all ſucceeding writers; and it may be doubted, whether from all his ſucceſſors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact ſurveyor of the inanimate world; his deſcriptions have always ſome peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exiſt. It may be obſerved, that the oldeſt poets of many nations preſerve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a ſhort celebrity, ſink into oblivion. The firſt, whoever they be, muſt take their ſentiments and deſcriptions immediately from knowledge; the reſemblance is therefore juſt, their deſcriptions are veriſi-

ed by every eye, and their ſentiments acknowledged by every breaſt. Thoſe whom their fame invites to the ſame ſtudies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain ſuch authority, as to ſtand in the place of nature to another, and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at laſt capricious and caſual. Shakſpeare, whether life or nature be his ſubject, ſhows plainly, that he has ſeen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or diſtorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his repreſentations to be juſt, and the learned ſee that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be eaſy to find any author, except Homer, who invented ſo much as Shakſpeare, who ſo much advanced the ſtudies which he cultivated, or effuſed ſo much novelty upon his age or country. The form, the character, the language, and the ſhows of the Engliſh drama are his. *He ſeems*, ſays Dennis, *to have been the very original of our Engliſh tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verſe, diverſified often by diſſyllable and triſſyllable terminations. For the diverſity diſtinguiſhes it from heroick harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common uſe makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verſe we make when we are writing proſe; we make ſuch verſe in common converſation.*[6]

[6] Thus, alſo, Dryden, in the Epiſtle Dedicatory to his *Rival Ladies*: "Shakeſpear (who with ſome errors not to be avoided in that age, had, undoubtedly, a larger ſoul of poeſie than ever any of our nation) was the firſt, who, to ſhun the pains of continual rhyming, invented that kind of writing which we call blank verſe, but the French more properly, *proſe meſurée*; into which the Engliſh tongue ſo naturally ſlides, that in writing proſe 'tis hardly to be avoided." STEEVENS.

I know not whether this praiſe is rigorouſly juſt. The diſſyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in *Gorboduc*, which is confeſſedly before our author; yet in *Hieronymo*,[7] of which the date is not certain, but which there is reaſon to believe at leaſt as old as his earlieſt plays. This however is certain, that he is the firſt who taught either tragedy or comedy to pleaſe, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are ſought becauſe they are ſcarce, and would not have been ſcarce, had they been much eſteemed.

To him we muſt aſcribe the praiſe, unleſs Spenſer may divide it with him, of having firſt diſcovered to how much ſmoothneſs and harmony the Engliſh language could be ſoftened. He has ſpeeches, perhaps ſometimes ſcenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed commonly to ſtrike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpoſe better, than when he tries to ſooth by ſoftneſs.

Yet it muſt be at laſt confeſſed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes ſomething to us; that, if much of his praiſe is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewiſe given by cuſtom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformities, and endure in him what we ſhould in another loath or deſpiſe. If we endured without praiſing, reſpect for the father of

[7] It appears from the Induction of Ben Jonſon's *Bartholomew Fair*, to have been acted before the year 1590. See alſo Vol. X. p. 344, n. 3. STEEVENS.

our drama might excuſe us; but I have ſeen, in the book of ſome modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which ſhow that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has ſcenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the concluſion. I am indeed far from thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were ſuch as would ſatisfy the audience, they ſatisfied the writer. It is ſeldom that authors, though more ſtudious of fame than Shakſpeare, riſe much above the ſtandard of their own age; to add a little to what is beſt will always be ſufficient for preſent praiſe, and thoſe who find themſelves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiaſts, and to ſpare the labour of contending with themſelves.

It does not appear, that Shakſpeare thought his works worthy of poſterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further proſpect, than of preſent popularity and preſent profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he ſolicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no ſcruple to repeat the ſame jeſts in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the ſame knot of perplexity, which may be at leaſt forgiven him, by thoſe who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a *maſk*, by a deception, which perhaps never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careleſs was this great poet of future fame,

that, though he retired to eaſe and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be diſguſted with fatigue, or diſabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor, deſired to reſcue thoſe that had been already publiſhed from the depravations that obſcured them, or ſecure to the reſt a better deſtiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine ſtate.[8]

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakſpeare in the late editions, the greater part were not publiſhed till about ſeven years after his death, and the few which appeared in his life are apparently thruſt into the world without the care of the author, and therefore probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publiſhers, clandeſtine or profeſſed, the negligence and unſkilfulneſs has by the late reviſers been ſufficiently ſhown. The faults of all are indeed numerous and groſs, and have not only corrupted many paſſages perhaps beyond recovery, but have brought others into ſuſpicion, which are only obſcured by obſolete phraſeology, or by the writer's unſkilfulneſs and affectation. To alter is more eaſy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Thoſe who ſaw that they muſt employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author publiſhed his own works, we ſhould have ſat quietly down to diſentangle his intricacies, and clear his obſcurities; but now we tear what we cannot looſe, and eject what we happen not to underſtand.

The faults are more than could have happened

[8] What Montaigne has ſaid of his own works may almoſt be applied to thoſe of Shakſpeare, who "n'avoit point d'autre ſergent de bande à ranger ſes pieces, que la fortune." STEEVENS.

without the concurrence of many cauſes. The ſtyle of Shakſpeare was in itſelf ungrammatical, perplexed, and obſcure; his works were tranſcribed for the players by thoſe who may be ſuppoſed to have ſeldom underſtood them; they were tranſmitted by copiers equally unſkilful, who ſtill multiplied errors; they were perhaps ſometimes mutilated by the actors, for the ſake of ſhortening the ſpeeches; and were at laſt printed without correction of the preſs.[9]

In this ſtate they remained, not as Dr. Warburton ſuppoſes, becauſe they were unregarded, but becauſe the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our anceſtors were accuſtomed to ſo much negligence of Engliſh printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At laſt an edition was undertaken by Rowe; not becauſe a poet was to be publiſhed by a poet, for Rowe ſeems to have thought very little on correction or explanation, but that our author's works might appear like thoſe of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and

[9] Much deſerved cenſure has been thrown out on the careleſſneſs of our ancient printers, as well as on the wretched tranſcripts they obtained from contemporary theatres. Yet I cannot help obſerving that, even at this inſtant, ſhould any one undertake to publiſh a play of Shakſpeare from pages of no greater fidelity than ſuch as are iſſued out for the uſe of performers, the preſs would teem with as interpolated and inextricable nonſenſe as it produced above a century ago. Mr. Colman (who cannot be ſuſpected of ignorance or miſrepreſentation) in his preface to the laſt edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, very forcibly ſtyles the prompter's books "the moſt inaccurate and barbarous of all manuſcripts." And well may they deſerve that character; for verſe (as I am informed) ſtill continues to be tranſcribed as proſe by a ſet of mercenaries, who in general have neither the advantage of literature or underſtanding. *Foliis tantum ne carmina manda, ne turbata volent ludibria*, was the requeſt of Virgil's Hero to the Sybil, and ſhould alſo be the ſupplication of every dramatick poet to the agents of a prompter. STEEVENS.

recommendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorouſly blamed for not performing what he did not undertake, and it is time that juſtice be done him, by confeſſing, that though he ſeems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his ſucceſſors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with cenſures of the ſtupidity by which the faults were committed, with diſplays of the abſurdities which they involved, with oſtentatious expoſitions of the new reading, and ſelf-congratulations on the happineſs of diſcovering it.

As of the other editors I have preſerved the prefaces, I have likewiſe borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or ſpirit; it relates, however, what is now to be known, and therefore deſerves to paſs through all ſucceeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true ſtate of Shakſpeare's text, ſhowed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reaſon to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and reſtored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticiſm, he rejected whatever he diſliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for diſtinguiſhing the genuine from the ſpurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given to Hemings and Condel, the firſt edi-

tors; and thoſe which he rejected, though, according to the licentiouſneſs of the preſs in thoſe times, they were printed during Shakſpeare's life, with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the latter printers.

This was a work which Pope ſeems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to ſuppreſs his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor*. He underſtood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is indeed dull, yet, like other tedious taſks is very neceſſary; but an emendatory critick would ill diſcharge his duty, without qualities very different from dullneſs. In peruſing a corrupted piece, he muſt have before him all poſſibilities of meaning, with all poſſibilities of expreſſion. Such muſt be his comprehenſion of thought, and ſuch his copiouſneſs of language. Out of many readings poſſible, he muſt be able to ſelect that which beſt ſuits with the ſtate, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular caſt of thought, and turn of expreſſion. Such muſt be his knowledge, and ſuch his taſte. Conjectural criticiſm demands more than humanity poſſeſſes, and he that exerciſes it with moſt praiſe, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common conſequence of ſucceſs. They whoſe excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude, that their powers are univerſal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was ſo much offended, when he was found to have left any thing for others

to do, that he paſſed the latter part of his life in a ſtate of hoſtility with verbal criticiſm.[1]

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of ſo great a writer may be loſt; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of compoſition and juſtneſs of remark, and containing a general criticiſm on his author, ſo extenſive that little can be added, and ſo exact, that little can be diſputed, every editor has an intereſt to ſuppreſs, but that every reader would demand its inſertion.

Pope was ſucceeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehenſion, and ſmall acquiſitions, with no native and intrinſick ſplendor of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in purſuing it. He collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errors. A man ſo anxiouſly ſcrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions he is not to be truſted without examination. He ſpeaks ſometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two firſt folios as of high, and the third folio

[1] The following compliment from Broome (ſays Dr. Joſeph Warton) Pope could not take much pleaſure in reading; for he could not value himſelf on his edition of Shakſpeare:

"If aught on earth, when once this breath is fled,
"With human tranſport touch the mighty dead,
"Shakſpeare, rejoice! his hand thy page refines;
"Now ev'ry ſcene with native brightneſs ſhines;
"Juſt to thy fame, he gives thy genuine thought;
"So Tully publiſh'd what Lucretius wrote;
"Prun'd by his care, thy laurels loftier grow,
"And bloom afreſh on thy immortal brow."

Broome's *Verſes to Mr. Pope.* STEEVENS.

as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the firſt is equivalent to all others, and that the reſt only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting thoſe diverſities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards uſed only the firſt.

Of his notes I have generally retained thoſe which he retained himſelf in his ſecond edition, except when they were confuted by ſubſequent annotators, or were too minute to merit preſervation. I have ſometimes adopted his reſtoration of a comma, without inſerting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himſelf for his achievement. The exuberant excreſcence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have ſometimes ſuppreſſed, and his contemptible oſtentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in ſome places ſhown him, as he would have ſhown himſelf, for the reader's diverſion, that the inflated emptineſs of ſome notes may juſtify or excuſe the contraction of the reſt.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithleſs, thus petulant and oſtentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has eſcaped, and eſcaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world ſupport thoſe who ſolicit favour, againſt thoſe who command reverence; and ſo eaſily is he praiſed, whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for ſuch ſtudies. He had, what is the firſt requiſite to emendatory criticiſm, that intuition by which the

poet's intention is immediately diſcovered, and that dexterity of intellect which deſpatches its work by the eaſieſt means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with cuſtoms, opinions, and traditions, ſeems to have been large; and he is often learned without ſhow. He ſeldom paſſes what he does not underſtand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and ſometimes haſtily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is ſolicitous to reduce to grammar, what he could not be ſure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakſpeare regarded more the ſeries of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being deſigned for the reader's deſk, was all that he deſired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently cenſured. He found the meaſure reformed in ſo many paſſages, by the ſilent labours of ſome editors, with the ſilent acquieſcence of the reſt, that he thought himſelf allowed to extend a little further the licence, which had already been carried ſo far without reprehenſion; and of his corrections in general, it muſt be confeſſed, that they are often juſt, and made commonly with the leaſt poſſible violation of the text.

But, by inſerting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predeceſſors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence, indeed, both in himſelf and others, was too great; he ſuppoſes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he ſeems not to ſuſpect a critick of fallibility, and it was but reaſonable that he ſhould claim what he ſo liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful enquiry and diligent conſideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wiſh for more.

Of the laſt editor it is more difficult to ſpeak. Reſpect is due to high place, tenderneſs to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be juſtly offended at that liberty of which he has himſelf ſo frequently given an example, nor very ſolicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have conſidered as part of his ſerious employments, and which, I ſuppoſe, ſince the ardour of compoſition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effuſions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquieſcence in his firſt thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by conſciouſneſs of quick diſcernment; and that confidence which preſumes to do, by ſurveying the ſurface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit ſometimes perverſe interpretations, and ſometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the ſentence admits, and at another diſcovers abſurdities, where the ſenſe is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewiſe often happy and juſt; and his interpretation of obſcure paſſages learned and ſagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected thoſe, againſt which the general voice of the publick has exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I ſuppoſe the author himſelf would deſire to be forgotten. Of the reſt, to part I have given the higheſt approbation, by inſerting the offered reading in the text; part I

have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though ſpecious; and part I have cenſured without reſerve, but I am ſure without bitterneſs of malice, and, I hope, without wantonneſs of inſult.

It is no pleaſure to me, in reviſing my volumes, to obſerve how much paper is waſted in confutation. Whoever conſiders the revolutions of learning, and the various queſtions of greater or leſs importance, upon which wit and reaſon have exerciſed their powers, muſt lament the unſucceſsfulneſs of enquiry, and the ſlow advances of truth, when he reflects, that great part of the labour of every writer is only the deſtruction of thoſe that went before him. The firſt care of the builder of a new ſyſtem is to demoliſh the fabricks which are ſtanding. The chief deſire of him that comments an author, is to ſhow how much other commentators have corrupted and obſcured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controverſy, are confuted and rejected in another, and riſe again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progreſs. Thus ſometimes truth and error, and ſometimes contrarieties of error, take each other's place by reciprocal invaſion. The tide of ſeeming knowledge which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves another naked and barren; the ſudden meteors of intelligence, which for a while appear to ſhoot their beams into the regions of obſcurity, on a ſudden withdraw their luſtre, and leave mortals again to grope their way.

Theſe elevations and depreſſions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of knowledge muſt for ever be expoſed, ſince they are not

eſcaped by the higheſt and brighteſt of mankind may ſurely be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themſelves but as the ſatellites of their authors. How canſt thou beg for life, ſays Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knoweſt that thou art now to ſuffer only what muſt another day be ſuffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name ſufficient to confer celebrity on thoſe who could exalt themſelves into antagoniſts, and his notes have raiſed a clamour too loud to be diſtinct. His chief aſſailants are the authors of *The Canons of Criticiſm*, and of *The Reviſal of Shakſpeare's Text*; of whom one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, ſuitable enough to the levity of the controverſy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to juſtice an aſſaſſin or incendiary. The one ſtings[2] like a fly, ſucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of Coriolanus, who was afraid that *girls with ſpits, and boys with ſtones, ſhould ſlay him in puny battle*; when the other croſſes my imagination, I remember the prodigy in *Macbeth*:

> "A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
> "Was by a mouſing owl hawk'd at and kill'd."

Let me however do them juſtice. One is a wit, and one a ſcholar.[3] They have both ſhown acute-

[2] See Boſwell's *Life of Dr. Johnſon*, Vol. I. p. 227, 3d. edit. REED.

[3] It is extraordinary that this gentleman ſhould attempt ſo vo-

neſs ſufficient in the diſcovery of faults, and have both advanced ſome probable interpretations of obſcure paſſages; but when they aſpire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falſely we all eſtimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, *Critical Obſervations on Shakſpeare* had been publiſhed by Mr. Upton,[4] a man ſkilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who ſeems to have had no great vigour of genius or nicety of taſte. Many of his explanations are curious and uſeful, but he likewiſe, though he profeſſed to oppoſe the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to reſtrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill ſeconded by his ſkill. Every cold empirick, when his heart expanded by a ſucceſsful experiment, ſwells into a theoriſt, and the laborious collator at ſome unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

Critical, hiſtorical, and explanatory Notes have been likewiſe publiſhed upon Shakſpeare by Dr. Grey, whoſe diligent peruſal of the old Engliſh writers has enabled him to make ſome uſeful obſervations. What he undertook he has well enough performed, but as he neither attempts judicial nor emendatory criticiſm, he employs rather his memory

luminous a work, *as the Reviſal of Shakſpeare's text*, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not ſo fortunate as to be furniſhed with either of the folio editions, much leſs any of the ancient quartos: and even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by Dr. Warburton's repreſentation." FARMER.

[4] Republiſhed by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c. STEEVENS.

than his ſagacity. It were to be wiſhed that all would endeavour to imitate his modeſty, who have not been able to ſurpaſs his knowledge.

I can ſay with great ſincerity of all my predeceſſors, what I hope will hereafter be ſaid of me, that not one has left Shakſpeare without improvement, nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for aſſiſtance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed when I wrote it to be my own. In ſome perhaps I have been anticipated; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentator, I am willing that the honour, be it more or leſs, ſhould be transferred to the firſt claimant, for his right, and his alone, ſtands above diſpute; the ſecond can prove his pretenſions only to himſelf, nor can himſelf always diſtinguiſh invention, with ſufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour, which they have not been careful of obſerving to one another. It is not eaſy to diſcover from what cauſe the acrimony of a ſcholiaſt can naturally proceed. The ſubjects to be diſcuſſed by him are of very ſmall importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the intereſt of ſect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a paſſage, ſeem to be queſtions that might exerciſe the wit, without engaging the paſſions. But whether it be, that *ſmall things make mean men proud*, and vanity catches ſmall occaſions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in thoſe that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentaries a ſpontaneous ſtrain of invective and con-

tempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the moſt furious controvertiſt in politicks againſt thoſe whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightneſs of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be inveſtigated is ſo near to inexiſtence, as to eſcape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original ſtate, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to ſupply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a ſpacious ſurface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to ſpirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illuſtrative, by which difficulties are explained; or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked; or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations tranſcribed from others, if I do not ſubjoin any other interpretation, I ſuppoſe commonly to be right, at leaſt I intend by acquieſcence to confeſs, that I have nothing better to propoſe.

After the labours of all the editors, I found many paſſages which appeared to me likely to obſtruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their paſſage. It is impoſſible for an expoſitor not to write too little for ſome, and too much for others. He can only judge what is neceſſary by his own experience; and how long ſoever he may deliberate, will at laſt explain many lines which the learned will think impoſſible to be mistaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. Theſe are cenſures merely relative, and muſt be quietly endured. I have

endeavoured to be neither ſuperfluouſly copious, nor ſcrupulouſly reſerved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning acceſſible to many, who before were frighted from peruſing him, and contributed ſomething to the publick, by diffuſing innocent and rational pleaſure.

The complete explanation of an author not ſyſtematick and conſequential, but deſultory and vagrant, abounding in caſual alluſions and light hints, is not to be expected from any ſingle ſcholiaſt. All perſonal reflections, when names are ſuppreſſed, muſt be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated; and cuſtoms, too minute to attract the notice of law, yet ſuch as modes of dreſs, formalities of converſation, rules of viſits, diſpoſition of furniture, and practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are ſo fugitive and unſubſtantial, that they are not eaſily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the receſſes of obſcure and obſolete papers, peruſed commonly with ſome other view. Of this knowledge every man has ſome, and none has much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, thoſe who can add any thing to his illuſtration, communicate their diſcoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to reſign many paſſages, which, though I did not underſtand them, will perhaps hereafter be explained, having, I hope, illuſtrated ſome, which others have neglected or mistaken, ſometimes by ſhort remarks, or marginal directions, ſuch as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will ſeem to deſerve; but that which is moſt difficult is not always moſt important, and to

an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obſcured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to obſerve. Some plays have more, and ſome fewer judicial obſervations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but becauſe I gave this part of my deſign to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is ſeldom pleaſed to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive. Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by ſubmiſſion to dictatorial deciſions, as the memory grows torpid by the uſe of a table-book. Some initiation is however neceſſary; of all ſkill, part is infuſed by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have therefore ſhown ſo much as may enable the candidate of criticiſm to diſcover the reſt.

To the end of moſt plays I have added ſhort ſtrictures, containing a general cenſure of faults, or praiſe of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of ſingularity, deviated from it. Nothing is minutely and particularly examined, and therefore it is to be ſuppoſed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praiſed, and in theſe which are praiſed much to be condemned.

The part of criticiſm in which the whole ſucceſſion of editors has laboured with the greateſt diligence, which has occaſioned the moſt arrogant oſtentation, and excited the keeneſt acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted paſſages, to which the publick attention having been firſt drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the perſecution, which, with

a kind of conſpiracy, has been ſince raiſed againſt all the publiſhers of Shakſpeare.

That many paſſages have paſſed in a ſtate of depravation through all the editions is indubitably certain; of theſe, the reſtoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or ſagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is ſafe and eaſy, the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril muſt not be avoided, nor the difficulty refuſed.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, ſome from the labours of every publiſher I have advanced into the text; thoſe are to be conſidered as in my opinion ſufficiently ſupported; ſome I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; ſome I have left in the notes without cenſure or approbation, as reſting in equipoiſe between objection and defence; and ſome, which ſeemed ſpecious but not right, I have inſerted with a ſubſequent animadverſion.

Having claſſed the obſervations of others, I was at laſt to try what I could ſubſtitute for their miſtakes, and how I could ſupply their omiſſions. I collated ſuch copies as I could procure, and wiſhed for more, but have not found the collectors of theſe rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindneſs put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By examining the old copies, I ſoon found that the later publiſhers, with all their boaſts of diligence, ſuffered many paſſages to ſtand unauthorized, and contented themſelves with Rowe's regulation

of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and with a little conſideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of theſe alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. Theſe corruptions I have often ſilently rectified; for the hiſtory of our language, and the true force of our words, can only be preſerved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and thoſe very frequent, ſmoothed the cadence, or regulated the meaſure; on theſe I have not exerciſed the ſame rigour; if only a word was tranſpoſed, or a particle inſerted or omitted, I have ſometimes ſuffered the line to ſtand; for the inconſtancy of the copies is ſuch, as that ſome liberties may be eaſily permitted. But this practice I have not ſuffered to proceed far, having reſtored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reaſon be preferred.

The emendations, which compariſon of copies ſupplied, I have inſerted in the text; ſometimes, where the improvement was ſlight, without notice, and ſometimes with an account of the reaſons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be ſometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiouſly indulged. It has been my ſettled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be diſturbed for the ſake of elegance, perſpicuity, or mere improvement of the ſenſe. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the firſt publiſhers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right, than we who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made ſtrange miſtakes by ignorance or

negligence, and that therefore ſomething may be properly attempted by criticiſm, keeping the middle way between preſumption and timidity.

Such criticiſm I have attempted to practiſe, and where any paſſage appeared inextricably perplexed, have endeavoured to diſcover how it may be recalled to ſenſe, with leaſt violence. But my firſt labour is, always to turn the old text on every ſide, and try if there be any interſtice, through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himſelf condemn me, as refuſing the trouble of reſearch, for the ambition of alteration. In this modeſt induſtry, I have not been unſucceſsful. I have reſcued many lines from the violations of temerity, and ſecured many ſcenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman ſentiment, that it is more honourable to ſave a citizen, than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preſerved the common diſtribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almoſt all the plays void of authority. Some of thoſe which are divided in the later editions have no diviſion in the firſt folio, and ſome that are divided in the folio have no diviſion in the preceding copies. The ſettled mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play, but few, if any, of our author's compoſitions can be properly diſtributed in that manner. An act is ſo much of the drama as paſſes without intervention of time, or change of place. A pauſe makes a new act. In every real, and therefore in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the reſtriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakſpeare knew, and this he practiſed; his plays were written, and at firſt printed in one unbroken

continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with ſhort pauſes, interpoſed as often as the ſcene is changed, or any conſiderable time is required to paſs. This method would at once quell a thouſand abſurdities.

In reſtoring the author's works to their integrity, I have conſidered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and ſentences. Whatever could be done by adjuſting points, is therefore ſilently performed, in ſome plays, with much diligence, in others with leſs; it is hard to keep a buſy eye ſteadily fixed upon evaneſcent atoms, or a diſcurſive mind upon evaneſcent truth.

The ſame liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of ſlight effect. I have ſometimes inſerted or omitted them without notice. I have done that ſometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which indeed the ſtate of the text may ſufficiently juſtify.

The greater part of readers, inſtead of blaming us for paſſing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles ſo much labour is expended, with ſuch importance of debate, and ſuch ſolemnity of diction. To theſe I anſwer with confidence, that they are judging of an art which they do not underſtand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promiſe that they would become in general, by learning criticiſm, more uſeful, happier, or wiſer.

As I practiſed conjecture more, I learned to truſt it leſs; and after I had printed a few plays, reſolved to inſert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myſelf, for every day encreaſes my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it muſt not be conſidered as very reprehenſible, if I have ſuffered it to play ſome freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be propoſed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, thoſe changes may be ſafely offered, which are not conſidered even by him that offers them as neceſſary or ſafe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been oſtentatiouſly diſplayed or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, firſt by railing at the ſtupidity, negligence, ignorance, and aſinine taſteleſſneſs of the former editors, ſhowing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and abſurdity of the old reading; then by propoſing ſomething, which to ſuperficial readers would ſeem ſpecious, but which the editor rejects with indignation; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphraſe, and concluding with loud acclamations on the diſcovery, and a ſober wiſh for the advancement and proſperity of genuine criticiſm.

All this may be done, and perhaps done ſome times without impropriety. But I have always ſuſpected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without ſo much labour appear to be right. The juſtneſs of a happy reſtoration ſtrikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticiſm, *quod dubitas ne feceris.*

To dread the ſhore which he ſees ſpread with wrecks, is natural to the ſailor. I had before my eye, ſo many critical adventures ended in miſ-

carriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page wit ſtruggling with its own ſophiſtry, and learning confuſed by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to cenſure thoſe whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was diſpoſſeſſing their emendations, how ſoon the ſame fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be by ſome other editor defended and eſtabliſhed.

> "Criticks I ſaw, that other's names efface,
> "And fix their own, with labour, in the place;
> "Their own, like others, ſoon their place reſign'd,
> "Or diſappear'd, and left the firſt behind." POPE.

That a conjectural critick ſhould often be miſtaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others, or himſelf, if it be conſidered, that in his art there is no ſyſtem, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates ſubordinate poſitions. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the paſſage, a ſlight miſapprehenſion of a phraſe, a caſual inattention to the parts connected, is ſufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculouſly; and when he ſucceeds beſt he produces perhaps but one reading of many probable, and he that ſuggeſts another will always be able to diſpute his claims.

It is an unhappy ſtate, in which danger is hid under pleaſure. The allurements of emendation are ſcarcely reſiſtible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once ſtarted a happy change, is too much delighted to conſider what objections may riſe againſt it.

Yet conjectural criticiſm has been of great uſe in the learned world; nor is it my intention to

depreciate a ſtudy, that has exerciſed ſo many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the Biſhop of Aleria[5] to Engliſh Bentley. The criticks on ancient authors have, in the exerciſe of their ſagacity, many aſſiſtances, which the editor of Shakſpeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and ſettled languages, whoſe conſtruction contributes ſo much to perſpicuity, that Homer has fewer paſſages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuſcripts than one; and they do not often conſpire in the ſame miſtakes. Yet Scaliger could confeſs to Salmaſius how little ſatisfaction his emendations gave him. *Illudunt nobis conjecturæ, quarum nos pudet, poſteaquam in meliores codices incidimus.* And Lipſius could complain, that criticks were making faults, by trying to remove them, *Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.* And indeed, when mere conjecture is to be uſed, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipſius, notwithſtanding their wonderful ſagacity and erudition, are often vague and diſputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more cenſured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raiſing in the

[5] —— *the Biſhop of Aleria*—] John Andreas. He was ſecretary to the Vatican Library during the papacies of Paul II. and Sixtus IV. By the former he was employed to ſuperintend ſuch works as were to be multiplied by the new art of printing, at that time brought into Rome. He publiſhed Herodotus, Strabo, Livy, Aulus Gellius, &c. His ſchool-fellow, Cardinal de Cuſa, procured him the biſhoprick of Accia, a province in Corſica; and Paul II. afterwards appointed him to that of *Aleria* in the ſame iſland, where he died in 1493. See Fabric. Bibl. Lat. Vol. III. 894. STEEVENS.

publick expectations, which at laſt I have not anſwered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to ſatisfy thoſe who know not what to demand, or thoſe who demand by deſign what they think impoſſible to be done. I have indeed diſappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my taſk with no ſlight ſolicitude. Not a ſingle paſſage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to reſtore; or obſcure, which I have not endeavoured to illuſtrate. In many I have failed like others; and from many, after all my efforts, I have retreated, and confeſſed the repulſe. I have not paſſed over, with affected ſuperiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myſelf, but where I could not inſtruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might eaſily have accumulated a maſs of ſeeming learning upon eaſy ſcenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that, where nothing was neceſſary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have ſaid enough, I have ſaid no more.

Notes are often neceſſary, but they are neceſſary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakſpeare, and who deſires to feel the higheſt pleaſure that the drama can give, read every play, from the firſt ſcene to the laſt, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not ſtoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is ſtrongly engaged, let it diſdain alike to turn aſide to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightneſs and obſcurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preſerve his comprehenſion of the dialogue and his intereſt in

the fable. And when the pleaſures of novelty have ceaſed, let him attempt exactneſs, and read the commentators.

Particular paſſages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is refrigerated by interruption; the thoughts are diverted from the principal ſubject; the reader is weary, he ſuſpects not why; and at laſt throws away the book which he has too diligently ſtudied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has been ſurveyed; there is a kind of intellectual remoteneſs neceſſary for the comprehenſion of any great work in its full deſign and in its true proportions; a cloſe approach ſhows the ſmaller niceties, but the beauty of the whole is diſcerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to conſider how little the ſucceſſion of editors has added to this author's power of pleaſing. He was read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him; while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his alluſions underſtood; yet then did Dryden pronounce, "that Shakſpeare was the man, who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largeſt and moſt comprehenſive ſoul. All the images of nature were ſtill preſent to him, and he drew them not laborioufly, but luckily: when he deſcribes any thing, you more than ſee it, you feel it too. Thoſe, who accuſe him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation; he was naturally learned; he needed not the ſpectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot ſay he is every where alike; were he ſo, I ſhould do him injury to compare him with the greateſt

of mankind. He is many times flat and inſipid; his comick wit degenerating into clenches, his ſerious ſwelling into bombaſt. But he is always great, when ſome great occaſion is preſented to him: no man can ſay, he ever had a fit ſubject for his wit, and did not then raiſe himſelf as high above the reſt of poets,

"Quantum lenta ſolent inter viburna cupreſſi."

It is to be lamented, that ſuch a writer ſhould want a commentary; that his language ſhould become obſolete, or his ſentiments obſcure. But it is vain to carry wiſhes beyond the condition of human things; that which muſt happen to all, has happened to Shakſpeare, by accident and time; and more than has been ſuffered by any other writer ſince the uſe of types, has been ſuffered by him through his own negligence of fame, or perhaps by that ſuperiority of mind, which deſpiſed its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged thoſe works unworthy to be preſerved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of reſtoring and explaining.

Among theſe candidates of inferior fame, I am now to ſtand the judgment of the publick; and wiſh that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient, and I ſhould feel little ſolicitude about the ſentence, were it to be pronounced only by the ſkilful and the learned.

Of what has been performed in this reviſal,[6] an

[6] This paragraph relates to the edition publiſhed in 1773, by George Steevens, Eſq. MALONE.

account is given in the following pages by Mr. Steevens, who might have ſpoken both of his own diligence and ſagacity, in terms of greater ſelf-approbation, without deviating from modeſty or truth.[7] JOHNSON.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

READER.

[Prefixed to Mr. STEEVENS's Edition of Twenty of the old Quarto Copies of SHAKSPEARE, &c. in 4 Vols. 8vo. 1766.]

THE plays of Shakſpeare have been ſo often republiſhed, with every ſeeming advantage which the joint labours of men of the firſt abilities could procure for them, that one would hardly imagine they could ſtand in need of any thing beyond the illuſtration of ſome few dark paſſages. Modes of expreſſion muſt remain in obſcurity, or be retrieved from time to time, as chance may

[7] All prefatory matters being in the preſent edition printed according to the order of time in which they originally appeared, the Advertiſement Dr. Johnſon refers to, will be found immediately after *Mr. Capell's Introduction.* STEEVENS.

throw the books of that age into the hands of criticks who ſhall make a proper uſe of them. Many have been of opinion that his language will continue difficult to all thoſe who are unacquainted with the provincial expreſſions which they ſuppoſe him to have uſed; yet, for my own part, I cannot believe but that thoſe which are now local may once have been univerſal, and muſt have been the language of thoſe perſons before whom his plays were repreſented. However, it is certain, that the inſtances of obſcurity from this ſource are very few.

Some have been of opinion that even a particular ſyntax prevailed in the time of Shakſpeare; but, as I do not recollect that any proofs were ever brought in ſupport of that ſentiment, I own I am of the contrary opinion.

In his time indeed a different arrangement of ſyllables had been introduced in imitation of the Latin, as we find in Aſcham; and the verb was frequently kept back in the ſentence; but in Shakſpeare no marks of it are diſcernible; and though the rules of ſyntax were more ſtrictly obſerved by the writers of that age than they have been ſince, he of all the number is perhaps the moſt ungrammatical. To make his meaning intelligible to his audience ſeems to have been his only care, and with the caſe of converſation he has adopted its incorrectneſs.

The paſt editors, eminently qualified as they were by genius and learning for this undertaking, wanted induſtry.; to cover which they publiſhed catalogues, tranſcribed at random, of a greater number of old copies than ever they can be ſuppoſed to have had in their poſſeſſion; when, at the ſame time, they never examined the few which we know

they had, with any degree of accuracy. The laſt editor alone has dealt fairly with the world in this particular; he profeſſes to have made uſe of no more than he had really ſeen, and has annexed a liſt of ſuch to every play, together with a complete one of thoſe ſuppoſed to be in being, at the concluſion of his work, whether he had been able to procure them for the ſervice of it or not.

For theſe reaſons I thought it would not be unacceptable to the lovers of Shakſpeare to collate all the quartos I could find, comparing one copy with the reſt, where there were more than one of the ſame play; and to multiply the chances of their being preſerved, by collecting them into volumes, inſtead of leaving the few that have eſcaped, to ſhare the fate of the reſt, which was probably haſtened by their remaining in the form of pamphlets, their uſe and value being equally unknown to thoſe into whoſe hands they fell.

Of ſome I have printed more than one copy; as there are many perſons, who, not contented with the poſſeſſion of a finiſhed picture of ſome great maſter, are deſirous to procure the firſt ſketch that was made for it, that they may have the pleaſure of tracing the progreſs of the artiſt from the firſt light colouring to the finiſhing ſtroke. To ſuch the earlier editions of *King John*, *Henry the Fifth*, *Henry the Sixth*, *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, will, I apprehend, not be unwelcome; ſince in theſe we may diſcern as much as will be found in the haſty outlines of the pencil, with a fair proſpect of that perfection to which he brought every performance he took the pains to retouch.

The general character of the quarto editions may more advantageouſly be taken from the words

of Mr. Pope, than from any recommendation of my own.

" The folio edition (ſays he) in which all the plays we now receive as his were firſt collected, was publiſhed by two players, Heminges and Condell, in 1623, ſeven years after his deceaſe. They declare that all the other editions were ſtolen and ſurreptitious,[7] and affirm theirs to be purged from the errors of the former. This is true as to the literal errors, and no other; for in all reſpects elſe it is far worſe than the quartos.

" Firſt, becauſe the additions of trifling and bombaſt paſſages are in this edition far more numerous. For whatever had been added ſince thoſe quartos by the actors, or had ſtolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all ſtand charged upon the author. He himſelf complained of this uſage in *Hamlet*, where he wiſhes *thoſe who play the clowns would ſpeak no more than is ſet down for them*, (Act III. ſc. iv.) But as a proof that he could not eſcape it, in the old editions of *Romeo and Juliet*, there is no hint of the mean conceits and ribaldries now to be found there. In others the ſcenes of the mobs, plebeians, and clowns, are vaſtly ſhorter than at preſent; and I have ſeen one in particular (which ſeems to have belonged to the play-houſe, by having the parts divided by lines, and the actors names in the margin,) where ſeveral of thoſe very paſſages were added in a

[7] It may be proper on this occaſion to obſerve, that the actors printed ſeveral of the plays in their folio edition from the very quarto copies which they are here ſtriving to depreciate; and additional corruption is the utmoſt that theſe copies gained by paſſing through their hands.

written hand, which ſince are to be found in the folio.

" In the next place, a number of beautiful paſſages were omitted, which were extant in the firſt ſingle editions; as it ſeems without any other reaſon than their willingneſs to ſhorten ſome ſcenes."

To this I muſt add, that I cannot help looking on the folio as having ſuffered other injuries from the licentious alteration of the players; as we frequently find in it an unuſual word changed into one more popular; ſometimes to the weakening of the ſenſe, which rather ſeems to have been their work, who knew that plainneſs was neceſſary for the audience of an illiterate age, than that it was done by the conſent of the author: for he would hardly have unnerved a line in his written copy, which they pretend to have tranſcribed, however he might have permitted many to have been familiarized in the repreſentation. Were I to indulge my own private conjecture, I ſhould ſuppoſe that his blotted manuſcripts were read over by one to another among thoſe who were appointed to tranſcribe them; and hence it would eaſily happen, that words of ſimilar ſound, though of ſenſes directly oppoſite, might be confounded with each other. They themſelves declare that Shakſpeare's time of blotting was paſt, and yet half the errors we find in their edition could not be merely typographical. Many of the quartos (as our own printers aſſure me) were far from being unſkilfully executed, and ſome of them were much more correctly printed than the folio, which was publiſhed at the charge of the ſame proprietors, whoſe names we find prefixed to the older copies; and I cannot join with Mr. Pope in acquitting that edition of more literal errors than thoſe which went before it. The

particles in it ſeem to be as fortuitouſly diſpoſed, and proper names as frequently undiſtinguiſhed by Italick or capital letters from the reſt of the text. The punctuation is equally accidental; nor do I ſee on the whole any greater marks of a ſkilful reviſal, or the advantage of being printed from unblotted originals in the one, than in the other. One reformation indeed there ſeems to have been made, and that very laudable; I mean the ſubſtitution of more general terms for a name too often unneceſſarily invoked on the ſtage; but no jot of obſcenity is omitted: and their caution againſt profaneneſs is, in my opinion, the only thing for which we are indebted to the judgment of the editors of the folio.[9]

How much may be done by the aſſiſtance of the old copies will now be eaſily known; but a more difficult taſk remains behind, which calls for other abilities than are requiſite in the laborious collator.

From a diligent peruſal of the comedies of contemporary authors, I am perſuaded that the meaning of many expreſſions in Shakſpeare might be retrieved; for the language of converſation can only be expected to be preſerved in works, which in their time aſſumed the merit of being pictures of men and manners. The ſtyle of converſation we may ſuppoſe to be as much altered as that of

[9] ——*and their caution againſt profaneneſs is, in my opinion, the only thing for which we are indebted to the editors of the folio.*] I doubt whether we are ſo much indebted to the *judgment* of the editors of the folio edition, for their caution againſt profaneneſs, as to the ſtatute 3 Jac. I. c. 21, which prohibits under ſevere penalties the uſe of the ſacred name in any plays or interludes. This occaſioned the playhouſe copies to be altered, and they printed from the playhouſe copies.

BLACKSTONE.

books; and, in conſequence of the change, we have no other authorities to recur to in either caſe. Should our language ever be recalled to a ſtrict examination, and the faſhion become general of ſtriving to maintain our old acquiſitions, inſtead of gaining new ones, which we ſhall be at laſt obliged to give up, or be incumbered with their weight; it will then be lamented that no regular collection was ever formed of the old Engliſh books; from which, as from ancient repoſitories, we might recover words and phraſes as often as caprice or wantonneſs ſhould call for variety; inſtead of thinking it neceſſary to adopt new ones, or barter ſolid ſtrength for feeble ſplendour, which no language has long admitted, and retained its purity.

We wonder that, before the time of Shakſpeare, we find the ſtage in a ſtate ſo barren of productions, but forget that we have hardly any acquaintance with the authors of that period, though ſome few of their dramatick pieces may remain. The ſame might be almoſt ſaid of the interval between that age and the age of Dryden, the performances of which, not being preſerved in ſets, or diffuſed as now, by the greater number printed, muſt lapſe apace into the ſame obſcurity.

> " Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
> " Multi ——————————."

And yet we are contented, from a few ſpecimens only, to form our opinions of the genius of ages gone before us. Even while we are blaming the taſte of that audience which received with applauſe the worſt plays in the reign of Charles the Second, we ſhould conſider that the few in poſſeſſion of our theatre, which would never have been heard a ſecond time had they been written now, were pro-

bably the beſt of hundreds which had been diſmiſſed with general cenſure. The collection of plays, interludes, &c. made by Mr. Garrick, with an intent to depoſit them hereafter in ſome publick library,[7] will be conſidered as a valuable acquiſition; for pamphlets have never yet been examined with a proper regard to poſterity. Moſt of the obſolete pieces will be found on enquiry to have been introduced into libraries but ſome few years ſince; and yet thoſe of the preſent age, which may one time or other prove as uſeful, are ſtill entirely neglected. I ſhould be remiſs, I am ſure, were I to forget my acknowledgments to the gentleman I have juſt mentioned, to whoſe benevolence I owe the uſe of ſeveral of the ſcarceſt quartos, which I could not otherwiſe have obtained; though I advertiſed for them, with ſufficient offers, as I thought, either to tempt the caſual owner to ſell, or the curious to communicate them; but Mr. Garrick's zeal would not permit him to withhold any thing that might ever ſo remotely tend to ſhow the perfections of that author who could only have enabled him to diſplay his own.

It is not merely to obtain juſtice to Shakſpeare, that I have made this collection, and adviſe others to be made. The general intereſt of Engliſh literature, and the attention due to our own language and hiſtory, require that our ancient writings ſhould be diligently reviewed. There is no age which has not produced ſome works that deſerved to be remembered; and as words and phraſes are only underſtood by comparing them in different places, the lower writers muſt be read for the explanation of

[7] This collection is now, in purſuance of Mr. Garrick's Will, placed in the Britiſh Muſeum. REED.

the higheſt. No language can be aſcertained and ſettled, but by deducing its words from their original ſources, and tracing them through their ſucceſſive varieties of ſignification; and this deduction can only be performed by conſulting the earlieſt and intermediate authors.

Enough has been already done to encourage us to do more. Dr. Hickes, by reviving the ſtudy of the Saxon language, ſeems to have excited a ſtronger curioſity after old Engliſh writers, than ever had appeared before. Many volumes which were mouldering in duſt have been collected; many authors which were forgotten have been revived; many laborious catalogues have been formed; and many judicious gloſſaries compiled; the literary tranſactions of the darker ages are now open to diſcovery; and the language in its intermediate gradations, from the Conqueſt to the Reſtoration, is better underſtood than in any former time.

To incite the continuance, and encourage the extenſion of this domeſtick curioſity, is one of the purpoſes of the preſent publication. In the plays it contains, the poet's firſt thoughts as well as words are preſerved; the additions made in ſubſequent impreſſions, diſtinguiſhed in Italicks, and the performances themſelves make their appearance with every typographical error, ſuch as they were before they fell into the hands of the player-editors. The various readings, which can only be attributed to chance, are ſet down among the reſt, as I did not chooſe arbitrarily to determine for others which were uſeleſs, or which were valuable. And many words differing only by the ſpelling, or ſerving merely to ſhow the difficulties which they to whoſe lot it firſt fell to diſentangle their perplexities muſt

have encountered, are exhibited with the reſt. I muſt acknowledge that ſome few readings have ſlipped in by miſtake, which can pretend to ſerve no purpoſe of illuſtration, but were introduced by confining myſelf to note the minuteſt variations of the copies, which ſoon convinced me that the oldeſt were in general the moſt correct. Though no proof can be given that the poet ſuperintended the publication of any one of theſe himſelf, yet we have little reaſon to ſuppoſe that he who wrote at the command of Elizabeth, and under the patronage of Southampton, was ſo very negligent of his fame, as to permit the moſt incompetent judges, ſuch as the players were, to vary at their pleaſure what he had ſet down for the firſt ſingle editions; and we have better grounds for ſuſpicion that his works did materially ſuffer from their preſumptuous corrections after his death.

It is very well known, that before the time of Shakſpeare, the art of making title-pages was practiſed with as much, or perhaps more ſucceſs than it has been ſince. Accordingly, to all his plays we find long and deſcriptive ones, which, when they were firſt publiſhed, were of great ſervice to the venders of them. Pamphlets of every kind were hawked about the ſtreets by a ſet of people reſembling his own *Autolycus*, who proclaimed aloud the qualities of what they offered to ſale, and might draw in many a purchaſer by the mirth he was taught to expect from *the humours of Corporal Nym, or the ſwaggering vaine of Auncient Piſtoll*, who was not to be tempted by the repreſentation of a fact merely hiſtorical. The players, however, laid aſide the whole of this garniture, not finding it ſo neceſſary to procure ſucceſs to a bulky volume,

when the author's reputation was eſtabliſhed, as it had been to beſpeak attention to a few ſtraggling pamphlets while it was yet uncertain.

The ſixteen plays which are not in theſe volumes, remained unpubliſhed till the folio in the year 1623, though the compiler of a work called *Theatrical Records*, mentions different ſingle editions of them all before that time. But as no one of the editors could ever meet with ſuch, nor has any one elſe pretended to have ſeen them, I think myſelf at liberty to ſuppoſe the compiler ſupplied the defects of the liſt out of his own imagination; ſince he muſt have had ſingular good fortune to have been poſſeſſed of two or three different copies of all, when neither editors nor collectors, in the courſe of near fifty years, have been able ſo much as to obtain the ſight of one of the number.[8]

At the end of the laſt volume I have added a tragedy of *King Leir*, publiſhed before that of Shakſpeare, which it is not improbable he might have ſeen, as the father kneeling to the daughter, when ſhe kneels to aſk his bleſſing, is found in it; a circumſtance two poets were not very likely to have hit on ſeparately; and which ſeems borrowed by the latter with his uſual judgment, it being the

[8] It will be obvious to every one acquainted with the ancient Engliſh language, that in almoſt all the titles of plays in this catalogue of Mr. *William Rufus Chetwood*, the ſpelling is conſtantly overcharged with ſuch a ſuperfluity of letters as is not to be found in the writings of Shakſpeare or his contemporaries. A more bungling attempt at a forgery was never obtruded on the publick. See the *Britiſh Theatre*, 1750; reprinted by Dodſley in 1756, under the title of "Theatrical Records, or an Account of Engliſh Dramatick Authors, and their Works," where all that is ſaid concerning an Advertiſement at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, 1597, is equally falſe, no copy of that play having been ever publiſhed by *Andrew Wiſe*.

moſt natural paſſage in the whole play; and is introduced in ſuch a manner, as to make it fairly his own. The ingenious editor of *The Reliques of Ancient Engliſh Poetry* having never met with this play, and as it is not preſerved in Mr. Garrick's collection, I thought it a curioſity worthy the notice of the publick.

I have likewiſe reprinted Shakſpeare's *Sonnets*, from a copy publiſhed in 1609, by G. Eld, one of the printers of his plays; which, added to the conſideration that they made their appearance with his name, and in his life-time, ſeems to be no ſlender proof of their authenticity. The ſame evidence might operate in favour of ſeveral more plays which are omitted here, out of reſpect to the judgment of thoſe who had omitted them before.[3]

It is to be wiſhed that ſome method of publication moſt favourable to the character of an author were once eſtabliſhed; whether we are to ſend into the world all his works without diſtinction, or arbitrarily to leave out what may be thought a diſgrace to him. The firſt editors, who rejected *Pericles*, retained *Titus Andronicus*; and Mr. Pope, without any reaſon, named *The Winter's Tale*, a play that bears the ſtrongeſt marks of the hand of Shakſpeare, among thoſe which he ſuppoſed to be ſpurious. Dr. Warburton has fixed a ſtigma on the three parts of *Henry the Sixth*, and ſome others:

> "Inde Dolabella, eſt, atque hinc Antonius;"

and all have been willing to plunder Shakſpeare,

[3] *Locrine*, 1595. *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, 1600. *London Prodigal*, 1605. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609. *Puritan*, 1600. *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, 1613. *Yorkſhire Tragedy*, 1608.

or mix up *a breed of barren metal* with his pureſt ore.

Joſhua Barnes, the editor of Euripides, thought every ſcrap of his author ſo ſacred, that he has preſerved with the name of one of his plays, the only remaining word of it. The ſame reaſon indeed might be given in his favour, which cauſed the preſervation of that valuable triſyllable; which is, that it cannot be found in any other place in the Greek language. But this does not ſeem to have been his only motive, as we find he has to the full as carefully publiſhed ſeveral detached and broken ſentences, the gleanings from ſcholiaſts, which have no claim to merit of that kind; and yet the author's works might be reckoned by ſome to be incomplete without them. If then this duty is expected from every editor of a Greek or Roman poet, why is not the ſame inſiſted on in reſpect of an Engliſh claſſick? But if the cuſtom of preſerving all, whether worthy of it or not, be *more honoured in the breach, than the obſervance*, the ſuppreſſion at leaſt ſhould not be conſidered as a fault. The publication of ſuch things as Swift had written merely to raiſe a laugh among his friends, has added ſomething to the bulk of his works, but very little to his character as a writer. The four volumes[1] that came out ſince Dr. Hawkeſworth's edition, not to look on them as a tax levied on the publick, (which I think one might without injuſtice,) contain not more than ſufficient to have made one of real value; and there is a kind of diſingenuity, not to give it a harſher title, in exhibiting what the author never meant ſhould ſee the light;

[1] Volumes XIII. XIV. XV. and XVI. in large 8vo. Nine more have ſince been added. REED.

for no motive, but a ſordid one, can betray the ſurvivors to make that publick, which they themſelves muſt be of opinion will be unfavourable to the memory of the dead.

Life does not often receive good unmixed with evil. The benefits of the art of printing are depraved by the facility with which ſcandal may be diffuſed, and ſecrets revealed; and by the temptation by which traffick ſolicits avarice to betray the weakneſſes of paſſion, or the confidence of friendſhip.

I cannot forbear to think theſe poſthumous publications injurious to ſociety. A man conſcious of literary reputation will grow in time afraid to write with tenderneſs to his ſiſter, or with fondneſs to his child; or to remit on the ſlighteſt occaſion, or moſt preſſing exigence, the rigour of critical choice, and grammatical ſeverity. That eſteem which preſerves his letters, will at laſt produce his diſgrace; when that which he wrote to his friend or his daughter ſhall be laid open to the publick.

There is perhaps ſufficient evidence, that moſt of the plays in queſtion, unequal as they may be to the reſt, were written by Shakſpeare; but the reaſon generally given for publiſhing the leſs correct pieces of an author, that it affords a more impartial view of a man's talents or way of thinking, than when we only ſee him in form, and prepared for our reception, is not enough to condemn an editor who thinks and practices otherwiſe. For what is all this to ſhow, but that every man is more dull at one time than another? a fact which the world would eaſily have admitted, without aſking any proofs in its ſupport that might be deſtructive to an author's reputation.

To conclude; if the work, which this publica-

tion was meant to facilitate, has been already performed, the ſatisfaction of knowing it to be ſo may be obtained from hence; if otherwiſe, let thoſe who raiſed expectations of correctneſs, and through negligence defeated them, be juſtly expoſed by future editors, who will now be in poſſeſſion of by far the greateſt part of what they might have enquired after for years to no purpoſe; for in reſpect of ſuch a number of the old quartos as are here exhibited, the firſt folio is a common book. This advantage will at leaſt ariſe, that future editors having equally recourſe to the ſame copies, can challenge diſtinction and preference only by genius, capacity, induſtry, and learning.

As I have only collected materials for future artiſts, I conſider what I have been doing as no more than an apparatus for their uſe. If the publick is inclined to receive it as ſuch, I am amply rewarded for my trouble; if otherwiſe, I ſhall ſubmit with cheerfulneſs to the cenſure which ſhould equitably fall on an injudicious attempt; having this conſolation, however, that my deſign amounted to no more than a wiſh to encourage others to think of preſerving the oldeſt editions of the Engliſh writers, which are growing ſcarcer every day; and to afford the world all the aſſiſtance or pleaſure it can receive from the moſt authentick copies extant of its NOBLEST POET.[5]

G. S.

[5] As the foregoing Advertiſement appeared when its author was young and uninformed, he cannot now abide by many ſentiments expreſſed in it: nor would it have been here reprinted, but in compliance with Dr. Johnſon's injunction, that all the relative Prefaces ſhould continue to attend his edition of our author's plays. STEEVENS.

MR. CAPELL'S

INTRODUCTION.[6]

IT is ſaid of the oſtrich, that ſhe drops her egg at random, to be diſpos'd of as chance pleaſes; either brought to maturity by the ſun's kindly warmth, or elſe cruſh'd by beaſts and the feet of paſſers-by: ſuch, at leaſt, is the account which naturaliſts have given us of this extraordinary bird; and admitting it for a truth, ſhe is in this a fit emblem of almoſt every great genius: they conceive and produce with eaſe thoſe noble iſſues of human underſtanding; but incubation, the dull work of putting them correctly upon paper and afterwards publiſhing, is a taſk they can not away with. If the original ſtate of all ſuch authors' writings, even from HOMER downward, could be enquir'd into and known, they would yield proof in abundance of the juſtneſs of what is here aſſerted: but the author now before us ſhall ſuffice for them all; being at once the greateſt inſtance of genius in producing noble things, and of negligence in providing for them afterwards. This negligence indeed was ſo great, and the condition in which

[6] Dr. Johnſon's opinion of this performance may be known from the following paſſage in Mr. Boſwell's *Life of Dr. Johnſon*, ſecond edit. Vol. III. p. 251: "If the man would have come to me, I would have endeavoured to endow his purpoſe with words, for as it is, he doth gabble monſtrouſly."

his works are come down to us ſo very deform'd, that it has, of late years, induc'd ſeveral gentlemen to make a reviſion of them: but the publick ſeems not to be ſatisfy'd with any of their endeavours; and the reaſon of it's diſcontent will be manifeſt, when the ſtate of his old editions, and the methods that they have taken to amend them, are fully lay'd open, which is the firſt buſineſs of this Introduction.

Of thirty-ſix plays which Shakſpeare has left us, and which compoſe the collection that was afterwards ſet out in folio; thirteen only were publiſh'd in his life-time, that have much reſemblance to thoſe in the folio; theſe thirteen are—"*Hamlet*, *Firſt and Second Henry IV.* *King Lear*, *Love's Labour's Loſt*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Midſummer-Night's Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Richard II. and III.* *Romeo and Juliet*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Troilus and Creſsida*." Some others, that came out in the ſame period, bear indeed the titles of—"*Henry V.* *King John*, *Merry Wives of Windſor*, and *Taming of the Shrew*;[7]" but are no other than either firſt draughts, or mutilated and perhaps ſurreptitious impreſſions of thoſe plays, but whether of the two is not eaſy to determine: *King John* is

[7] This is meant of the firſt quarto edition of *The Taming of the Shrew*; for the ſecond was printed from the folio. But the play in this firſt edition appears certainly to have been a ſpurious one, from Mr. POPE's account of it, who ſeems to have been the only editor whom it was ever ſeen by: great pains has been taken to trace who he had it of, (for it was not in his collection) but without ſucceſs.

[Mr. Capell afterwards procured a ſight of this deſideratum, a circumſtance which he has quaintly recorded in a note annexed to the MS. catalogue of his *Shakſperiana*: "—lent by Mr. Malone, an Iriſh gentleman, living in Queen Ann Street Eaſt."]

STEEVENS.

certainly a firſt draught, and in two parts; and ſo much another play, that only one line of it is retain'd in the ſecond: there is alſo a firſt draught of the *Second and Third Parts of Henry VI.* publiſhed in his life-time under the following title,—"*The whole Contention betweene the two famous Houſes, Lancaſter and Yorke:*" and to theſe plays, ſix in number, may be added—the firſt impreſſion of *Romeo and Juliet*, being a play of the ſame ſtamp: The date of all theſe quarto's, and that of their ſeveral re-impreſſions, may be ſeen in a table that follows the Introduction. *Othello* came out only one year before the folio; and is, in the main, the ſame play that we have there: and this too is the caſe of the firſt-mention'd thirteen; notwithſtanding there are in many of them great variations, and particularly in *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Richard III.* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

As for the plays, which, we ſay, are either the poet's firſt draughts, or elſe imperfect and ſtolen copies, it will be thought, perhaps, they might as well have been left out of the account: but they are not wholly uſeleſs; ſome *lacunæ*, that are in all the other editions, have been judiciouſly fill'd up in modern impreſſions by the authority of theſe copies; and in ſome particular paſſages of them, where there happens to be a greater conformity than uſual between them and the more perfect editions, there is here and there a various reading that does honour to the poet's judgment, and ſhould upon that account be preſum'd the true one; in other reſpects, they have neither uſe nor merit, but are meerly curioſities.

Proceed we then to a deſcription of the other fourteen. They all abound in faults, though not in equal degree; and thoſe faults are ſo numerous,

and of ſo many different natures, that nothing but a peruſal of the pieces themſelves can give an adequate conception of them; but amongſt them are theſe that follow. Diviſion of acts and ſcenes, they have none; *Othello* only excepted, which is divided into acts: entries of perſons are extreamly imperfect in them, (ſometimes more, ſometimes fewer than the ſcene requires) and their Exits are very often omitted; or, when mark'd, not always in the right place; and few ſcenical directions are to be met with throughout the whole: ſpeeches are frequently confounded, and given to wrong perſons, either whole, or in part; and ſometimes, inſtead of the perſon ſpeaking, you have the actor who preſented him: and in two of the plays, (*Love's Labour's Loſt*, and *Troilus and Creſsida*,) the ſame matter, and in nearly the ſame words, is ſet down twice in ſome paſſages; which who ſees not to be only a negligence of the poet, and that but one of them ought to have been printed? But the reigning fault of all is in the meaſure: proſe is very often printed as verſe, and verſe as proſe; or, where rightly printed verſe, that verſe is not always right divided: and in all theſe pieces, the ſongs are in every particular ſtill more corrupt than the other parts of them. Theſe are the general and principal defects: to which if you add—tranſpoſition of words, ſentences, lines, and even ſpeeches; words omitted, and others added without reaſon; and a punctuation ſo deficient, and ſo often wrong, that it hardly deſerves regard; you have, upon the whole, a true but melancholy picture of the condition of theſe firſt printed plays: which bad as it is, is yet better than that of thoſe which came after; or than that of the ſubſequent folio im-

preſſion of ſome of theſe which we are now ſpeaking of.

This folio impreſſion was ſent into the world ſeven years after the author's death, by two of his ſellow-players; and contains, beſides the laſt mention'd fourteen, the true and genuine copies of the other ſix plays, and ſixteen that were never publiſh'd before:[8] the editors make great profeſſions of fidelity, and ſome complaint of injury done to them and the author by ſtolen and maim'd copies; giving withal an advantageous, if juſt, idea of the copies which they have follow'd: but ſee the terms they make uſe of. "It had bene a thing, we confeſſe, worthie to have bene wiſhed, that the author himſelfe had liv'd to have ſet forth, and overſeen his owne writings; but ſince it hath bin ordain'd otherwiſe, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie his friends, the office of their care, and paine, to have collected & publiſh'd them; and ſo to have publiſh'd them, as where (before) you were abus'd with diverſe ſtolne, and ſurreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and ſtealthes of injurious impoſtors, that expos'd them: even thoſe, are now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect

[8] There is yet extant in the books of the Stationers' Company, an entry bearing date—Feb. 12, 1624, to Meſſrs. Jaggard and Blount, the proprietors of this firſt folio, which is thus worded: "*Mr. Wm. Shakeſpear's Comedy's Hiſtory's & Tragedy's ſo many of the ſaid Copy's as hee not enter'd to other men:*" and this entry is follow'd by the titles of all thoſe ſixteen plays that were firſt printed in the folio: The other twenty plays (*Othello*, and *King John*, excepted; which the perſon who furniſhed this tranſcript, thinks he may have overlook'd,) are enter'd too in theſe books, under their reſpective years; but to whom the tranſcript ſays not.

of their limbes; and all the reſt, abſolute in their numbers, as he conceived them. Who, as he was a happie imitator of nature, was a moſt gentle expreſſer of it. His minde and hand went together: and what he thought, he uttered with that eaſineſſe, that wee have ſcarſe received from him a blot in his papers." Who now does not feel himſelf inclin'd to expect an accurate and good performance in the edition of theſe prefacers? But alas, it is nothing leſs: for (if we except the ſix ſpurious ones, whoſe places were then ſupply'd by true and genuine copies) the editions of plays preceding the folio, are the very baſis of thoſe we have there; which are either printed from thoſe editions, or from the copies which they made uſe of; and this is principally evident in—" *Firſt and Second Henry IV. Love's Labour's Loſt, Merchant of Venice, Midſummer-Night's Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, Richard II. Titus Andronicus,* and *Troilus and Creſsida*;" for in the others we ſee ſomewhat a greater latitude, as was obſerv'd a little above: but in theſe plays, there is an almoſt ſtrict conformity between the two impreſſions: ſome additions are in the ſecond, and ſome omiſſions; but the faults and errors of the quarto's are all preſerv'd in the folio, and others added to them; and what difference there is, is generally for the worſe on the ſide of the folio editors; which ſhould give us but faint hopes of meeting with greater accuracy in the plays which they firſt publiſh'd; and, accordingly, we find them ſubject to all the imperfections that have been noted in the former: nor is their edition in general diſtinguiſh'd by any mark of preference above the earlieſt quarto's, but that ſome of their plays are divided into acts, and ſome others into acts and ſcenes; and that with due preciſion,

and agreeable to the author's idea of the nature of ſuch diviſions. The order of printing theſe plays, the way in which they are claſs'd, and the titles given them, being matters of ſome curioſity, the Table that is before the firſt folio is here reprinted: and to it are added marks, put between crotchets, ſhewing the plays that are divided; *a* ſignifying—acts, *a & ſ*—acts and ſcenes.

TABLE of Plays in the folio.[9]

COMEDIES.

The Tempeſt. [*a & ſ.*]
*The Two Gentlemen of Verona.** [*a & ſ.*]
The Merry Wives of Windſor. [*a & ſ.*]
Meaſure for Meaſure. [*a & ſ.*]
*The Comedy of Errours.** [*a.*]
Much adoo about Nothing. [*a.*]
*Loves Labour loſt.**

[9] The plays, mark'd with aſteriſks, are ſpoken of by name, in a book, call'd—*Wit's Treaſury, being the Second Part of Wit's Commonwealth*, written by Francis Meres, at p. 282: who, in the ſame paragraph, mentions another play as being Shakſpeare's, under the title of *Loves Labours Wonne*; a title that ſeems well adapted to *All's well that ends well*, and under which it might be firſt acted. In the paragraph immediately preceding, he ſpeaks of his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, and his *Sonnets*: this book was printed in 1598, by P. Short, for Cuthbert Burbie; octavo, ſmall. The ſame author, at p. 283, mentions too a *Richard the Third*, written by Doctor Leg, author of another play, called *The Deſtruction of Jeruſalem*. And there is in the Muſæum, a manuſcript Latin play upon the ſame ſubject, written by one Henry Lacy in 1586: which Latin play is but a weak performance; and yet ſeemeth to be the play ſpoken of by Sir John Harrington, (for the author was a Cambridge man, and of St. John's,) in this paſſage of his *Apologie of Poetrie*, prefix'd to his tranſlation of Arioſto's *Orlando*, edit. 1591, fol: "—and for tragedies, to omit other famous tragedies; that, that was played at S. Johns in Cambridge of *Richard the* 3.

*Midſommer Nights Dreame.** [*a.*]
*The Merchant of Venice.** [*a.*]
As you like it. [*a.* & *f.*]
The Taming of the Shrew.
All is well, that Ends well. [*a.*]
Twelfe-Night, or what you will. [*a* & *f.*]
The Winters Tale. [*a* & *f.*]

HISTORIES.

*The Life and Death of King John.** [*a* & *f.*]
*The Life & Death of Richard the ſecond.** [*a* & *f.*]
The Firſt part of King Henry the fourth. [*a* & *f.*]
*The Second Part of K. Henry the fourth.** [*a* & *f.*]
The Life of King Henry the Fift.
The Firſt part of King Henry the Sixt.
The Second part of King Hen. the Sixt.
The Third part of King Henry the Sixt.
*The Life & Death of Richard the Third.** [*a* & *f.*]
The Life of King Henry the Eight. [*a* & *f.*]

TRAGEDIES.

[*Troylus and Creſsida*] *from the ſecond folio; omitted in the firſt.*
The Tragedy of Coriolanus. [*a.*]
*Titus Andronicus.** [*a.*]
*Romeo and Juliet.**
Timon of Athens.
The Life and death of Julius Cæſar. [*a.*]
The Tragedy of Macbeth. [*a* & *f.*]
The Tragedy of Hamlet.
King Lear. [*a* & *f.*]

would move (I thinke) Phalaris the tyraunt, and terrifie all tyrānous minded men, frō following their fooliſh ambitious humors, ſeeing how his ambition made him kill his brother, his nephews, his wife, beſide infinit others; and laſt of all after a ſhort and troubleſome raigne, to end his miſerable life, and to have his body burried after his death."

Othello, the Moore of Venice. [*a* & *f.*]
Antony and Cleopater.
Cymbeline King of Britaine. [*a* & *f.*]

Having premis'd thus much about the ſtate and condition of theſe firſt copies, it may not be improper, nor will it be abſolutely a digreſſion, to add ſomething concerning their authenticity: in doing which, it will be greatly for the reader's eaſe,—and our own, to confine ourſelves to the quarto's: which, it is hop'd, he will allow of; eſpecially, as our intended vindication of them will alſo include in it (to the eye of a good obſerver) that of the plays that appear'd firſt in the folio: which therefore omitting, we now turn ourſelves to the quarto's.

We have ſeen the ſtur that is endeavour'd to be thrown upon them indiſcriminately by the player editors, and we ſee it too wip'd off by their having themſelves follow'd the copies that they condemn. A modern editor, who is not without his followers, is pleas'd to aſſert confidently in his preface, that they are printed from "piece-meal parts, and copies of prompters:" but his arguments for it are ſome of them without foundation, and the others not concluſive; and it is to be doubted, that the opinion is only thrown out to countenance an abuſe that has been carry'd to much too great lengths by himſelf and another editor,—that of putting out of the text paſſages that they did not like. Theſe cenſures then, and this opinion being ſet aſide, is it criminal to try another conjecture, and ſee what can be made of it? It is known, that Shakſpeare liv'd to no great age, being taken off in his fifty-third year; and yet his works are

ſo numerous, that, when we take a ſurvey of them, they ſeem the productions of a life of twice that length: for to the thirty-ſix plays in this collection, we muſt add ſeven, (one of which is in two parts,) perhaps written over again;[1] ſeven others that were publiſh'd ſome of them in his life-time, and all with his name; and another ſeven, that are upon good grounds imputed to him; making in all, fifty-eight plays; beſides the part that he may reaſonably be thought to have had in other men's labours, being himſelf a player and a manager of theatres: what his proſe productions were, we know not: but it can hardly be ſuppos'd, that he, who had ſo conſiderable a ſhare in the confidence of the Earls of Eſſex and Southampton, could be a mute ſpectator only of controverſies in which, they were ſo much intereſted; and his other poetical works, that are known, will fill a volume the ſize of theſe that we have here. When the number and bulk of theſe pieces, the ſhortneſs of his life, and the other buſy employments of it are reflected upon duly, can it be a wonder that he ſhould be ſo looſe a tranſcriber of them? or why ſhould we refuſe to give credit to what his companions tell us, of the ſtate of thoſe tranſcriptions, and of the facility with which they were pen'd? Let it then be granted, that theſe quarto's are the poet's own copies, however they were come by; haſtily written at firſt, and iſſuing from preſſes moſt of them as corrupt and licentious as can any where be produc'd, and not overſeen by himſelf, nor by any of his friends: and there can be no ſtronger reaſon for ſubſcribing to any opinion, than may be drawn in favour of this from the condition of

[1] Vide, this Introduction, p. 327.

all the other plays that were firſt printed in the folio; for, in method of publication, they have the greateſt likeneſs poſſible to thoſe which preceded them, and carry all the ſame marks of haſte and negligence; yet the genuineneſs of the latter is atteſted by thoſe who publiſh'd them, and no proof brought to invalidate their teſtimony. If it be ſtill aſk'd, what then becomes of the accuſation brought againſt the quarto's by the player editors, the anſwer is not ſo far off as may perhaps be expected: it may be true that they were "ſtoln;" but ſtoln from the author's copies, by tranſcribers who found means to get at them:[2] and "maim'd" they muſt needs be, in reſpect of their many alterations after the firſt performance: and who knows, if the difference that is between them, in ſome of the plays that are common to them both, has not been ſtudiouſly heighten'd by the player editors,—who had the means in their power, being maſters of all the alterations,—to give at once a greater currency to their own lame edition, and ſupport the charge which they bring againſt the quarto's? this, at leaſt, is a probable opinion, and no bad way of accounting for thoſe differences.[3]

[2] But ſee a note at p. 330, which ſeems to infer that they were fairly come by: which is, in truth, the editor's opinion, at leaſt of ſome of them; though, in way of argument, and for the ſake of clearneſs, he has here admitted the charge in that full extent in which they bring it.

[3] Some of theſe alterations are in the quarto's themſelves; (another proof this, of their being authentick,) as in *Richard II*: where a large ſcene, that of the king's depoſing, appears firſt in the copy of 1608, the third quarto impreſſion, being wanting in the two former: and in one copy of *2 Henry IV.* there is a ſcene too that is not in the other, though of the ſame year; it is the firſt of Act the third. And *Hamlet* has ſome ſtill more conſiderable; for the copy of 1605 has theſe words:—

It were eaſy to add abundance of other arguments in favour of theſe quarto's;—Such as, their exact affinity to almoſt all the publications of this ſort that came out about that time; of which it will hardly be aſſerted by any reaſoning man, that they are all clandeſtine copies, and publiſh'd without their authors' conſent: next, the high improbability of ſuppoſing that none of theſe plays were of the poet's own ſetting-out: whoſe caſe is render'd ſingular by ſuch a ſuppoſition; it being certain, that every other author of the time, without exception, who wrote any thing largely, publiſh'd ſome of his plays himſelf, and Ben Jonſon all of them: nay, the very errors and faults of theſe quarto's,—of ſome of them at leaſt, and thoſe ſuch as are brought againſt them by other arguers,—are, with the editor, proofs of their genuineneſs; for from what hand, but that of the author himſelf, could come thoſe ſeemingly-ſtrange repetitions which are ſpoken of at p. 329? thoſe imperfect exits, and entries of perſons who have no concern in the play at all, neither in the ſcene where they are made to enter, nor in any other part of it? yet ſuch there are in ſeveral of theſe quarto's; and ſuch might well be expected in the haſty draughts of ſo negligent an author, who neither ſaw at once all he might want, nor, in ſome inſtances, gave himſelf ſufficient time to conſider the fitneſs

"Newly imprinted and enlarged to almoſt as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie:" now though no prior copy has yet been produc'd, it is certain there was ſuch by the teſtimony of this title-page: and that the play was in being at leaſt nine years before, is prov'd by a book of Doctor Lodge's printed in 1596; which play was perhaps an imperfect one; and not unlike that we have now of *Romeo and Juliet*, printed the year after; a fourth inſtance too of what the note advances.

of what he was then penning. Theſe and other like arguments might, as is ſaid before, be collected, and urg'd for the plays that were firſt publiſh'd in the quarto's; that is, for fourteen of them, for the other ſix are out of the queſtion: but what has been enlarg'd upon above, of their being follow'd by the folio, and their apparent general likeneſs to all the other plays that are in that collection, is ſo very forcible as to be ſufficient of itſelf to ſatisfy the unprejudic'd, that the plays of both impreſſions ſpring all from the ſame ſtock, and owe their numerous imperfections to one common origin and cauſe,—the too-great negligence and haſte of their over-careleſs producer.

But to return to the thing immediately treated,—the ſtate of the old editions. The quarto's went through many impreſſions, as may be ſeen in the Table: and, in each play, the laſt is generally taken from the impreſſion next before it, and ſo onward to the firſt; the few that come not within this rule, are taken notice of in the Table: and this further is to be obſerv'd of them: that, generally ſpeaking, the more diſtant they are from the original, the more they abound in faults; 'till, in the end, the corruptions of the laſt copies become ſo exceſſive, as to make them of hardly any worth. The folio too had it's re-impreſſions, the dates and notices of which are likewiſe in the Table, and they tread the ſame round as did the quarto's: only that the third of them has ſeven plays more, (ſee their titles below,[4]) in which it is follow'd by

[4] *Locrine*; *The London Prodigal*; *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*; *The Puritan, or, the Widow of Watling Street*; *Sir John Old-caſtle*; *Thomas Lord Cromwell*; and *The Yorkſhire Tragedy*: And the imputed ones, mention'd a little above, are theſe;—*The Arraignment of Paris*; *Birth of Merlin*; *Fair Em*; *Ed-*

the laſt; and that again by the firſt of the modern impreſſions, which come now to be ſpoken of.

If the ſtage be a mirror of the times, as undoubtedly it is, and we judge of the age's temper by what we ſee prevailing there, what muſt we think of the times that ſucceeded Shakſpeare? Jonſon, favour'd by a court that delighted only in maſques, had been gaining ground upon him even in his life-time; and his death put him in full poſſeſſion of a poſt he had long aſpir'd to, the empire of the drama: the props of this new king's throne, were—Fletcher, Shirley, Middleton, Maſſinger, Broome, and others; and how unequal they all were, the monarch and his ſubjects too, to the poet they came after, let their works teſtify: yet they had the vogue on their ſide, during all thoſe bleſſed times, that preceded the civil war, and Shakſpeare was held in diſeſteem. The war, and medley government that follow'd, ſwept all theſe things away: but they were reſtor'd with the king;

ward III. Merry Devil of Edmonton; *Mucedorus*; and *The Two Noble Kinſmen*: but in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, Rowley is call'd his partner in the title-page; and Fletcher, in *The Two Noble Kinſmen*. What external proofs there are of their coming from Shakſpeare, are gather'd all together, and put down in the Table; and further it not concerns us to engage: but let thoſe who are inclin'd to diſpute it, carry this along with them:—that London, in Shakſpeare's time, had a multitude of playhouſes; erected ſome in inn-yards, and ſuch like places, and frequented by the loweſt of the people; ſuch audiences might have been ſeen ſome years ago in Southwark and Bartholomew, and may be ſeen at this day in the country; to which it was alſo a cuſtom for players to make excurſion, at wake times and feſtivals: and for ſuch places, and ſuch occaſions, might theſe pieces be compos'd in the author's early time; the worſt of them ſuiting well enough to the parties they might be made for:—and this, or ſomething nearly of this ſort, may have been the caſe too of ſome plays in his great collection, which ſhall be ſpoken of in their place.

and another ſtage took place, in which Shakſpeare had little ſhare. Dryden had then the lead, and maintain'd it for half a century: though his government was ſometimes diſputed by Lee, Tate, Shadwell, Wytcherley, and others; weaken'd much by *The Rehearſal*; and quite overthrown in the end by Otway, and Rowe: what the caſt of their plays was, is known to every one: but that Shakſpeare, the true and genuine Shakſpeare, was not much reliſh'd, is plain from the many alterations of him, that were brought upon the ſtage by ſome of thoſe gentlemen, and by others within that period.

But, from what has been ſaid, we are not to conclude—that the poet had no admirers: for the contrary is true; and he had in all this interval no inconſiderable party amongſt men of the greateſt underſtanding, who both ſaw his merit, in deſpite of the darkneſs it was then wrapt up in, and ſpoke loudly in his praiſe; but the ſtream of the publick favour ran the other way. But this too coming about at the time we are ſpeaking of, there was a demand for his works, and in a form that was more convenient than the folio's: in conſequence of which, the gentleman laſt mentioned was ſet to work by the bookſellers; and, in 1709, he put out an edition in ſix volumes octavo, which, unhappily, is the baſis of all the other moderns: for this editor went no further than to the edition neareſt to him in time, which was the folio of 1685, the laſt and worſt of thoſe impreſſions: this he republiſh'd with great exactneſs; correcting here and there ſome of it's groſſeſt miſtakes, and dividing into acts and ſcenes the plays that were not divided before.

But no ſooner was this edition in the hands of

the publick, than they ſaw in part its deficiencies, and one of another ſort began to be required of them; which accordingly was ſet about ſome years after by two gentlemen at once, Mr. Pope and Mr. Theobald. The labours of the firſt came out in 1725, in ſix volumes quarto: and he has the merit of having firſt improv'd his author, by the inſertion of many large paſſages, ſpeeches, and ſingle lines, taken from the quarto's; and of amending him in other places, by readings fetch'd from the ſame: but his materials were few, and his collation of them not the moſt careful; which, join'd to other faults, and to that main one—of making his predeceſſor's the copy himſelf follow'd, brought his labours in diſrepute, and has finally ſunk them in neglect.

His publication retarded the other gentleman, and he did not appear 'till the year 1733, when his work too came out in ſeven volumes, octavo. The oppoſition that was between them ſeems to have enflam'd him, which was heighten'd by other motives, and he declaims vehemently againſt the work of his antagoniſt: which yet ſerv'd him for a model; and his own is made only a little better, by his having a few more materials; of which he was not a better collator than the other, nor did he excel him in uſe of them; for, in this article, both their judgments may be equally call'd in queſtion; in what he has done that is conjectural, he is rather more happy; but in this he had large aſſiſtances.

But the gentleman that came next, is a critick of another ſtamp: and purſues a track, in which it is greatly to be hop'd he will never be follow'd in the publication of any authors whatſoever: for this were, in effect, to annihilate them,

if carry'd a little further; by deſtroying all marks of peculiarity and notes of time, all eaſineſs of expreſſion and numbers, all juſtneſs of thought, and the nobility of not a few of their conceptions: The manner in which his author is treated, excites an indignation that will be thought by ſome to vent itſelf too ſtrongly; but terms weaker would do injuſtice to my feelings, and the cenſure ſhall be hazarded. Mr. Pope's edition was the ground-work of this over-bold one; ſplendidly printed at Oxford in ſix quarto volumes, and publiſh'd in the year 1744: the publiſher diſdains all collation of folio, or quarto; and fetches all from his great ſelf, and the moderns his predeceſſors: wantoning in very licence of conjecture; and ſweeping all before him, (without notice, or reaſon given,) that not ſuits his taſte, or lies level to his conceptions. But this juſtice ſhould be done him:—as his conjectures are numerous, they are oftentimes not unhappy; and ſome of them are of that excellence, that one is ſtruck with amazement to ſee a perſon of ſo much judgment as he ſhows himſelf in them, adopt a method of publiſhing that runs counter to all the ideas that wiſe men have hitherto entertain'd of an editor's province and duty.

The year 1747 produc'd a fifth edition, in eight octavo volumes, publiſh'd by Mr. Warburton; which though it is ſaid in the title-page to be the joint work of himſelf and the ſecond editor, the third ought rather to have been mention'd, for it is printed from his text. The merits of this performance have been ſo thoroughly diſcuſs'd in two very ingenious books, *The Canons of Criticiſm*, and *Reviſal of Shakſpeare's Text*, that it is needleſs to ſay any more of it: this only ſhall be added to what may be there met with,—that the edition is

not much benefited by freſh acquiſitions from the old ones, which this gentleman ſeems to have neglected.[5]

Other charges there are, that might be brought againſt theſe modern impreſſions, without infringing the laws of truth or candour either: but what is ſaid, will be ſufficient; and may ſatisfy their greateſt favourers,—that the ſuperſtructure cannot be a ſound one, which is built upon ſo bad a foundation as that work of Mr. Rowe's; which all of them, as we ſee, in ſucceſſion, have yet made their corner-ſtone: The truth is, it was impoſſible that ſuch a beginning ſhould end better than it has done: the fault was in the ſetting-out; and all the diligence that could be us'd, join'd to the diſcernment of a Pearce, or a Bentley, could never purge their author of all his defects by their method of proceeding.

The editor now before you was appriz'd in time of this truth; ſaw the wretched condition his author was reduc'd to by theſe late tamperings, and thought ſeriouſly of a cure for it, and that ſo long ago as the year 1745; for the attempt was firſt ſuggeſted by that gentleman's performance, which

[5] It will perhaps be thought ſtrange, that nothing ſhould be ſaid in this place of another edition that came out about a twelvemonth ago, in eight volumes, octavo; but the reaſons for it are theſe:—There is no uſe made of it, nor could be; for the preſent was finiſh'd, within a play or two, and printed too in great part, before that appear'd: the firſt ſheet of this work (being the firſt of Vol. II.) went to the preſs in September 1760; and this volume was follow'd by volumes VIII. IV. IX. I. VI. and VII; the laſt of which was printed off in Auguſt 1765: In the next place, the merits and demerits of it are unknown to the preſent editor even at this hour: this only he has perceiv'd in it, having look'd it but ſlightly over, that the text it follows is that of its neareſt predeceſſor, and from that copy it was printed.

came out at Oxford the year before: which when he had perus'd with no little aſtoniſhment, and conſider'd the fatal conſequences that muſt inevitably follow the imitation of ſo much licence, he reſolv'd himſelf to be the champion; and to exert to the uttermoſt ſuch abilities as he was maſter of, to ſave from further ruin an edifice of this dignity, which England muſt for ever glory in. Hereupon he poſſeſs'd himſelf of the other modern editions, the folio's, and as many quarto's as could preſently be procur'd; and, within a few years after, fortune and induſtry help'd him to all the reſt, ſix only excepted;[6] adding to them withal twelve more, which the compilers of former tables had no knowledge of. Thus furniſh'd, he fell immediately to collation,—which is the firſt ſtep in works of this nature; and, without it, nothing is done to purpoſe,—firſt of moderns with moderns, then of moderns with ancients, and afterwards of ancients with others more ancient: 'till, at the laſt, a ray of light broke forth upon him, by which he hop'd to find his way through the wilderneſs of theſe editions into that fair country the poet's real habitation. He had not proceeded far in his collation, before he ſaw cauſe to come to this reſolution;—to ſtick invariably to the old editions, (that is, the

[6] But of one of theſe ſix, (a 1. *Henry IV.* edition 1604) the editor thinks he is poſſeſſed of a very large fragment, imperfect only in the firſt and laſt ſheet; which has been collated, as far as it goes, along with others: And of the twelve quarto editions, which he has had the good fortune to add to thoſe that were known before, ſome of them are of great value; as may be ſeen by looking into the Table.

[As this table relates chiefly to Mr. Capell's deſiderata, &c. (and had been-anticipated by another table equally comprehenſive, which the reader will find in the next volume,) it is here omitted.]

beſt of them,) which hold now the place of manuſcripts, no ſcrap of the author's writing having the luck to come down to us; and never to depart from them, but in caſes where reaſon, and the uniform practice of men of the greateſt note in this art, tell him—they may be quitted; nor yet in thoſe, without notice. But it will be neceſſary, that the general method of this edition ſhould now be lay'd open; that the publick may be put in a capacity not only of comparing it with thoſe they already have, but of judging whether any thing remains to be done towards the fixing this author's text in the manner himſelf gave it.

It is ſaid a little before,—that we have nothing of his in writing; that the printed copies are all that is left to guide us; and that thoſe copies are ſubject to numberleſs imperfections, but not all in like degree: our firſt buſineſs then, was—to examine their merit, and ſee on which ſide the ſcale of goodneſs preponderated; which we have generally found, to be on that of the moſt ancient: it may be ſeen in the Table, what editions are judg'd to have the preference among thoſe plays that were printed ſingly in *quarto*; and for thoſe plays, the text of thoſe editions is chiefly adher'd to: in all the reſt, the firſt folio is follow'd; the text of which is by far the moſt faultleſs of the editions in that form; and has alſo the advantage in three quarto plays, in 2 *Henry IV. Othello*, and *Richard III.* Had the editions thus follow'd been printed with carefulneſs, from correct copies, and copies not added to or otherwiſe alter'd after thoſe impreſſions, there had been no occaſion for going any further: but this was not at all the caſe, even in the beſt of them; and it therefore became proper and neceſſary to look into the other old editions,

and to ſelect from thence whatever improves the author, or contributes to his advancement in perfectneſs, the point in view throughout all this performance: that they do improve him, was with the editor an argument in their favour; and a preſumption of genuineneſs for what is thus ſelected, whether additions, or differences of any other nature; and the cauſes of their appearing in ſome copies, and being wanting in others, cannot now be diſcover'd, by reaſon of the time's diſtance, and defect of fit materials for making the diſcovery. Did the limits of his Introduction allow of it, the editor would gladly have dilated and treated more at large this article of his plan; as that which is of greateſt importance, and moſt likely to be conteſted of any thing in it: but this doubt, or this diſſent, (if any be,) muſt come from thoſe perſons only who are not yet poſſeſs'd of the idea they ought to entertain of theſe ancient impreſſions; for of thoſe who are, he fully perſuades himſelf he ſhall have both the approof and the applauſe. But without entering further in this place into the reaſonableneſs, or even neceſſity, of ſo doing, he does for the preſent acknowledge—that he has every-where made uſe of ſuch materials as he met with in other old copies, which he thought improv'd the editions that are made the ground-work of the preſent text: and whether they do ſo or no, the judicious part of the world may certainly know, by turning to a collection that will be publiſh'd; where all diſcarded readings are enter'd, all additions noted, and variations of every kind; and the editions ſpecify'd, to which they ſeverally belong.

But, when theſe helps were adminiſter'd, there was yet behind a very great number of paſſages,

labouring under various defects and thoſe of various degree, that had their cure to ſeek from ſome other ſources, that of copies affording it no more: For theſe he had recourſe in the firſt place to the aſſiſtance of modern copies: and, where that was incompetent, or elſe abſolutely deficient, which was very often the caſe, there he ſought the remedy in himſelf, uſing judgment and conjecture; which, he is bold to ſay, he will not be found to have exercis'd wantonly, but to follow the eſtabliſh'd rules of critique with ſoberneſs and temperance. Theſe emendations, (whether of his own, or other gentlemen,[7]) carrying in themſelves a face of certainty, and coming in aid of places that were apparently corrupt, are admitted into the text, and the rejected reading is always put below; ſome others,—that are neither of that certainty, nor are of that neceſſity, but are ſpecious and plauſible, and may be thought by ſome to mend the paſſage they belong to,—will have a place in the collection that is ſpoken of above. But where it is ſaid, that the rejected reading is always put below, this muſt be taken with ſome reſtriction: for ſome of the emen-

[7] In the manuſcripts from which all theſe plays are printed, the emendations are given to their proper owners by initials and other marks that are in the margin of thoſe manuſcripts; but they are ſuppreſſed in the print for two reaſons: Firſt, their number, in ſome pages, makes them a little unſightly: and the editor profeſſes himſelf weak enough to like a well-printed book: In the next place, he does declare—that his only object has been, to do ſervice to his great author; which provided it be done, he thinks it of ſmall importance by what hand the ſervice was adminiſter'd: If the partizans of former editors ſhall chance to think them injur'd by this ſuppreſſion, he muſt upon this occaſion violate the rules of modeſty, by declaring—that he himſelf is the moſt injur'd by it; whoſe emendations are equal, at leaſt in number, to all theirs if put together; to ſay nothing of his recover'd readings, which are more conſiderable ſtill.

dations, and of courſe the ancient readings upon which they are grounded, being of a complicated nature, the general method was there inconvenient; and, for theſe few, you are refer'd to a note which will be found among the reſt: and another ſort there are, that are ſimply inſertions; theſe are effectually pointed out by being printed in the gothick or black character.

Hitherto, the defects and errors of theſe old editions have been of ſuch a nature, that we could lay them before the reader, and ſubmit to his judgment the remedies that are apply'd to them; which is accordingly done, either in the page itſelf where they occur, or in ſome note that is to follow: but there are ſome behind that would not be ſo manag'd; either by reaſon of their frequency, or difficulty of ſubjecting them to the rules under which the others are brought: they have been ſpoken of before at p. 329, where the corruptions are all enumerated, and are as follows;—a want of proper exits and entrances, and of many ſcenical directions, throughout the work in general, and, in ſome of the plays, a want of diviſion; and the errors are thoſe of meaſure, and punctuation: all theſe are mended, and ſupply'd, without notice and ſilently; but the reaſons for ſo doing, and the method obſerv'd in doing it, ſhall be a little enlarg'd upon, that the fidelity of the editor, and that which is chiefly to diſtinguiſh him from thoſe who have gone before, may ſtand ſacred and unimpeachable; and, firſt, of the diviſion.

The thing chiefly intended in reprinting the liſt of titles that may be ſeen at p. 332, was,—to ſhow which plays were divided into acts, which into acts and ſcenes, and which of them were not divided at all; and the number of the firſt claſs is—

eight; of the third—eleven: for though in *Henry V.* 1 *Henry VI. Love's Labour's Loſt,* and *The Taming of the Shrew,* there is ſome diviſion aim'd at; yet it is ſo lame and erroneous, that it was thought beſt to conſider them as totally undivided, and to rank them accordingly: now when theſe plays were to be divided, as well thoſe of the firſt claſs as thoſe of the third, the plays of the ſecond claſs were ſtudiouſly attended to; and a rule was pick'd out from them, by which to regulate this diviſion: which rule might eaſily have been diſcover'd before, had but any the leaſt pains have been beſtow'd upon it; and certainly it was very well worth it, ſince neither can the repreſentation be manag'd, nor the order and thread of the fable be properly conceiv'd by the reader, 'till this article is adjuſted. The plays that are come down to us divided, muſt be look'd upon as of the author's own ſettling; and in them, with regard to acts, we find him following eſtabliſh'd precepts, or, rather, conforming himſelf to the practice of ſome other dramatick writers of his time; for they, it is likely, and nature, were the books he was beſt acquainted with: his ſcene diviſions he certainly did not fetch from writers upon the drama; for, in them, he obſerves a method in which perhaps he is ſingular, and he is invariable in the uſe of it: with him, a change of ſcene implies generally a change of place, though not always; but always an entire evacuation of it, and a ſucceſſion of new perſons: that *liaiſon* of the ſcenes, which Jonſon ſeems to have attempted, and upon which the French ſtage prides itſelf, he does not appear to have had any idea of; of the other unities he was perfectly well appriz'd; and has follow'd them, in one of his plays, with as great ſtrictneſs and greater happineſs than can

perhaps be met with in any other writer: the play meant is *The Comedy of Errors*; in which the action is one, the place one, and the time ſuch as even Ariſtotle himſelf would allow of—the revolution of half a day: but even in this play, the change of ſcene ariſes from change of perſons, and by that it is regulated; as are alſo all the other plays that are not divided in the folio: for whoever will take the trouble to examine thoſe that are divided, (and they are pointed out for him in the liſt,) will ſee them conform exactly to the rule above-mention'd; and can then have but little doubt, that it ſhould be apply'd to all the reſt.[8] To have diſtinguiſh'd theſe diviſions,—made (indeed) without the authority, but following the example of the folio,—had been uſeleſs and troubleſome; and the editor fully perſuades himſelf, that what he has ſaid will be ſufficient, and that he ſhall be excus'd by the ingenious and candid for overpaſſing them without further notice: whoſe pardon he hopes alſo to have for ſome other unnotic'd matters that are related to this in hand, ſuch as—marking the place of action, both general and particular; ſupplying ſcenical directions; and due regulating of exits, and entrances: for the firſt, there is no title in the old editions; and in both the latter, they are ſo deficient and faulty throughout, that it would not be much amiſs if we look'd upon them as wanting too; and then all theſe ſeveral articles might be

[8] The diviſions that are in the folio are religiouſly adher'd to, except in two or three inſtances which will be ſpoken of in their place; ſo that, as is ſaid before, a peruſal of thoſe old-divided plays will put every one in a capacity of judging whether the preſent editor has proceeded rightly or no: the current editions are divided in ſuch a manner, that nothing like a rule can be collected from any of them.

conſider'd as additions, that needed no other pointing out than a declaration that they are ſo: the light they throw upon the plays in general, and particularly upon ſome parts of them,—ſuch as, the battle ſcenes throughout; Cæſar's paſſage to the ſenate-houſe, and ſubſequent aſſaſſination; Antony's death; the ſurprizal and death of Cleopatra; that of Titus Andronicus; and a multitude of others, which are all directed new in this edition,—will juſtify theſe inſertions; and may, poſſibly, merit the reader's thanks, for the great aids which they afford to his conception.

It remains now to ſpeak of errors of the old copies which are here amended without notice, to wit—the pointing, and wrong diviſion of much of them reſpecting the numbers. And as to the firſt, it is ſo extremely erroneous, throughout all the plays, and in every old copy, that ſmall regard is due to it; and it becomes an editor's duty, (inſtead of being influenc'd by ſuch a punctuation, or even caſting his eyes upon it, to attend cloſely to the meaning of what is before him, and to new-point it accordingly: was it the buſineſs of this edition—to make parade of diſcoveries, this article alone would have afforded ample field for it; for a very great number of paſſages are now firſt ſet to rights by this only, which, before, had either no ſenſe at all, or one unſuiting the context, and unworthy the noble penner of it; but all the emendations of this ſort, though inferior in merit to no others whatſoever, are conſign'd to ſilence; ſome few only excepted, of paſſages that have been much conteſted, and whoſe preſent adjuſtment might poſſibly be call'd in queſtion again; theſe will be ſpoken of in ſome note, and a reaſon given for embracing them: all the other parts of the works have been examin'd

with equal diligence, and equal attention; and the editor flatters himſelf, that the punctuation he has follow'd, (into which he has admitted ſome novelties,[9]) will be found of ſo much benefit to his author, that thoſe who run may read, and that with profit and underſtanding. The other great miſtake in theſe old editions, and which is very inſufficiently rectify'd in any of the new ones, relates to the poet's numbers; his verſe being often wrong divided, or printed wholly as proſe, and his proſe as often printed like verſe: this, though not ſo univerſal as their wrong pointing, is yet ſo extenſive an error in the old copies, and ſo impoſſible to be pointed out otherwiſe than by a note, that an editor's ſilent amendment of it is ſurely pardonable at leaſt; for who would not be diſguſted with that perpetual ſameneſs which muſt neceſſarily have been in all the notes of this ſort? Neither are they, in truth, emendations that require proving; every good ear does immediately adopt them, and every lover of the poet will be pleas'd with that acceſſion of beauty which reſults to him from them: it is perhaps to be lamented, that there is yet ſtanding in his works much unpleaſing mixture of proſaick and metrical dialogue, and ſometimes in places ſeemingly improper, as—in *Othello*, Vol. XIX. p. 273; and ſome others which men of judgment will be able to pick out for themſelves: but theſe blemiſhes are not now to be wip'd away, at leaſt not by an editor, whoſe province it far exceeds to make a

[9] If the uſe of theſe new pointings, and alſo of certain marks that he will meet with in this edition, do not occur immediately to the reader, (as we think it will) he may find it explain'd to him at large in the preface to a little octavo volume intitl'd—"*Proluſions, or, Select Pieces of Ancient Poetry*;" publiſh'd in 1760 by this editor, and printed for Mr. Tonſon.

change of this nature; but muſt remain as marks of the poet's negligence, and of the haſte with which his pieces were compos'd: what he manifeſtly intended proſe, (and we can judge of his intentions only from what appears in the editions that are come down to us,) ſhould be printed as proſe, what verſe as verſe; which, it is hop'd, is now done, with an accuracy that leaves no great room for any further conſiderable improvements in that way.

Thus have we run through, in as brief a manner as poſſible, all the ſeveral heads, of which it was thought proper and even neceſſary that the publick ſhould be appriz'd; as well thoſe that concern preceding editions, both old and new; as the other which we have juſt quitted,—the method obſerv'd in the edition that is now before them: which though not ſo entertaining, it is confeſs'd, nor affording ſo much room to diſplay the parts and talents of a writer, as ſome other topicks that have generally ſupply'd the place of them; ſuch as—criticiſms or panegyricks upon the author, hiſtorical anecdotes, eſſays, and *florilegia*; yet there will be found ſome odd people, who may be apt to pronounce of them—that they are ſuitable to the place they ſtand in, and convey all the inſtruction that ſhould be look'd for in a preface. Here, therefore, we might take our leave of the reader, bidding him welcome to the banquet that is ſet before him; were it not apprehended, and reaſonably, that he will expect ſome account why it is not ſerv'd up to him at preſent with it's accuſtom'd and laudable garniture, of "*Notes, Gloſſaries,*" &c. Now though it might be reply'd, as a reaſon for what is done,—that a very great part of the world, amongſt whom is the editor himſelf, profeſs much dislike

to this paginary intermixture of text and comment; in works meerly of entertainment, and written in the language of the country; as alſo—that he, the editor, does not poſſeſs the ſecret of dealing out notes by meaſure, and diſtributing them amongſt his volumes ſo nicely that the equality of their bulk ſhall not be broke in upon the thickneſs of a ſheet of paper; yet, having other matter at hand which he thinks may excuſe him better, he will not have recourſe to theſe above-mention'd: which matter is no other, than his very ſtrong deſire of approving himſelf to the publick a man of integrity; and of making his future preſent more perfect, and as worthy of their acceptance as his abilities will let him. For the explaining of what is ſaid, which is a little wrap'd up in myſtery at preſent, we muſt inform that publick—that another work is prepar'd, and in great forwardneſs, having been wrought upon many years; nearly indeed as long as the work which is now before them, for they have gone hand in hand almoſt from the firſt: this work, to which we have given for title *The School of Shakſpeare*, conſiſts wholly of extracts, (with obſervations upon ſome of them, interſpers'd occaſionally,) from books that may properly be call'd—his ſchool; as they are indeed the ſources from which he drew the greater part of his knowledge in mythology and claſſical matters,[1] his fable, his hiſtory, and even

[1] Though our expreſſions, as we think, are ſufficiently guarded in this place, yet, being fearful of miſconſtruction, we deſire to be heard further as to this affair of his learning. It is our firm belief then,—that Shakſpeare was very well grounded, at leaſt in *Latin*, at ſchool: It appears from the cleareſt evidence poſſible, that his father was a man of no little ſubſtance, and very well able to give him ſuch education; which, perhaps, he

the ſeeming peculiarities of his language: to furniſh out theſe materials, all the plays have been

might be inclin'd to carry further, by ſending him to a univerſity; but was prevented in this deſign (if he had it) by his ſon's early marriage, which, from monuments, and other like evidence, it appears with no leſs certainty, muſt have happen'd before he was ſeventeen, or very ſoon after: the diſpleaſure of his father, which was the conſequence of this marriage, or elſe ſome exceſſes which he is ſaid to have been guilty of, it is probable, drove him up to town; where he engag'd early in ſome of the theatres, and was honour'd with the patronage of the Earl of Southampton: his *Venus and Adonis* is addreſs'd to the Earl in a very pretty and modeſt dedication, in which he calls it—"*the firſt heire of his invention*;" and uſhers it to the world with this ſingular motto,—

"Vilia miretur vulgus, mihi flavus Apollo
"Pocula Caſtalia plena miniſtret aqua;"

and the whole poem, as well as his *Lucrece*, which follow'd it ſoon after, together with his choice of thoſe ſubjects, are plain marks of his acquaintance with ſome of the Latin claſſicks, at leaſt at that time: The diſſipation of youth, and, when that was over, the buſy ſcene in which he inſtantly plung'd himſelf, may very well be ſuppos'd to have hinder'd his making any great progreſs in them; but that ſuch a mind as his ſhould quite loſe the tincture of any knowledge it had once been imbu'd with, can not be imagin'd: accordingly we ſee, that this ſchool-learning (for it was no more) ſtuck with him to the laſt; and it was the recordations, as we may call it, of that learning which produc'd the Latin that is in many of his plays, and moſt plentifully in thoſe that are moſt early: every ſeveral piece of it is aptly introduc'd, given to a proper character, and utter'd upon ſome proper occaſion; and ſo well cemented, as it were, and join'd to the paſſage it ſtands in, as to deal conviction to the judicious—that the whole was wrought up together, and fetch'd from his own little ſtore, upon the ſudden and without ſtudy.

The other languages, which he has ſometimes made uſe of, that is—the *Italian* and *French*, are not of ſuch difficult conqueſt that we ſhould think them beyond his reach: an acquaintance with the firſt of them was a ſort of faſhion in his time; Surrey and the ſonnet-writers ſet it on foot, and it was continu'd by Sidney and Spenſer: all our poetry iſſu'd from that ſchool; and it would be wonderful, indeed, if he, whom we ſaw a little before putting himſelf with ſo much zeal under the banner of

perus'd, within a very ſmall number, that were in print in his time or ſome ſhort time after; the

the muſes, ſhould not have been tempted to taſte at leaſt of that fountain to which of all his other brethren there was ſuch continual reſort: let us conclude then, that he did taſte of it; but, happily for himſelf, and more happy for the world that enjoys him now, he did not find it to his reliſh, and threw away the cup: metaphor apart, it is evident—that he had ſome little knowledge of the Italian: perhaps, juſt as much as enabl'd him to read a novel or a poem; and to put ſome few fragments of it, with which his memory furniſh'd him, into the mouth of a pedant, or fine gentleman.

How or when he acquir'd it we muſt be content to be ignorant, but of the French language he was ſomewhat a greater maſter than of the two that have gone before; yet, unleſs we except their noveliſts, he does not appear to have had much acquaintance with any of their writers; what he has given us of it is meerly colloquial, flows with great eaſe from him, and is reaſonably pure: Should it be ſaid—he had travel'd for't, we know not who can confute us: in his days indeed, and with people of his ſtation, the cuſtom of doing ſo was rather rarer than in ours; yet we have met with an example, and in his own band of players, in the perſon of the very famous Mr. Kempe; of whoſe travels there is mention in a ſilly old play, call'd—*The Return from Parnaſſus*, printed in 1606, but written much earlier in the time of Queen Elizabeth: add to this—the exceeding great livelineſs and juſtneſs that is ſeen in many deſcriptions of the ſea and of promontories, which, if examin'd, ſhew another ſort of knowledge of them than is to be gotten in books or relations; and if theſe be lay'd together, this conjecture of his travelling may not be thought void of probability.

One opinion, we are ſure, which is advanc'd ſomewhere or other, is utterly ſo;—that this Latin, and this Italian, and the language that was laſt mention'd, are inſertions and the work of ſome other hand: there has been ſtarted now and then in philological matters a propoſition ſo ſtrange as to carry its own condemnation in it, and this is of the number; it has been honour'd already with more notice than it is any ways intitl'd to, where the poet's Latin is ſpoke of a little while before; to which anſwer it muſt be left, and we ſhall paſs on—to profeſs our entire belief of the genuineneſs of every ſeveral part of this work, and that he only was the author of it: he might write beneath himſelf at particular times, and certainly does in ſome places; but

chroniclers his contemporaries, or that a little preceded him; many original poets of that age, and many tranſlators; with eſſayiſts, novelliſts, and ſtory-mongers in great abundance: every book, in ſhort, has been conſulted that it was poſſible to procure, with which it could be thought he was acquainted, or that ſeem'd likely to contribute any thing towards his illuſtration. To what degree they illuſtrate him, and in how new a light they ſet the character of this great poet himſelf can never be conceiv'd as it ſhould be, 'till theſe extracts come forth to the publick view, in their juſt magnitude, and properly digeſted: for beſides the various paſſages that he has either made uſe of or alluded to, many other matters have been ſelected and will be found in this work, tending all to the ſame end,—our better knowledge of him and his writings; and one claſs of them there is, for which we ſhall perhaps be cenſur'd as being too profuſe in them, namely—the almoſt innumerable examples, drawn from theſe ancient writers, of words and modes of expreſſion which many have thought

he is not always without excuſe; and it frequently happens that a weak ſcene ſerves to very good purpoſe, as will be made appear at one time or other. It may be thought that there is one argument ſtill unanſwer'd, which has been brought againſt his acquaintance with the Latin and other languages; and that is,—that, had he been ſo acquainted, it could not have happen'd but that ſome imitations would have crept into his writings, of which certainly there are none: but this argument has been anſwer'd in effect; when it was ſaid—that his knowledge in theſe languages was but ſlender, and his converſation with the writers in them ſlender too of courſe: but had it been otherwiſe, and he as deeply read in them as ſome people have thought him, his works (it is probable) had been as little deform'd with imitations as we now ſee them: Shakſpeare was far above ſuch a practice; he had the ſtores in himſelf, and wanted not the aſſiſtance of a foreign hand to dreſs him up in things of their lending.

peculiar to Shakſpeare, and have been too apt to impute to him as a blemiſh: but the quotations of this claſs do effectually purge him from ſuch a charge, which is one reaſon of their profuſion; though another main inducement to it has been, a deſire of ſhewing the true force and meaning of the aforeſaid unuſual words and expreſſions; which can no way be better aſcertain'd, than by a proper variety of well-choſen examples. Now,—to bring this matter home to the ſubject for which it has been alledg'd, and upon whoſe account this affair is now lay'd before the publick ſomewhat before it's time,—who is ſo ſhort-ſighted as not to perceive, upon firſt reflection, that, without manifeſt injuſtice, the notes upon this author could not precede the publication of the work we have been deſcribing; whoſe choiceſt materials would unavoidably and certainly have found a place in thoſe notes, and ſo been twice retail'd upon the world; a practice which the editor has often condemn'd in others, and could therefore not reſolve to be guilty of in himſelf? By poſtponing theſe notes a while, things will be as they ought: they will then be confin'd to that which is their proper ſubject, explanation alone, intermix'd with ſome little criticiſm; and inſtead of long quotations, which would otherwiſe have appear'd in them, the *School of Shakſpeare* will be referr'd to occaſionally; and one of the many indexes with which this ſame *School* will be provided, will afford an ampler and truer Gloſſary than can be made out of any other matter. In the mean while, and 'till ſuch time as the whole can be got ready, and their way clear'd for them by publication of the book above-mention'd, the reader will pleaſe to take in good part ſome few of theſe notes with which he will be pre-

ſented by and by: they were written at leaſt four years ago, with intention of placing them at the head of the ſeveral notes that are deſign'd for each play; but are now detach'd from their fellows, and made parcel of the Introduction, in compliance with ſome friends' opinion; who having given them a peruſal, will needs have it, that 'tis expedient the world ſhould be made acquainted forthwith—in what ſort of reading the poor poet himſelf, and his editor after him, have been unfortunately immers'd.

This diſcourſe is run out, we know not how, into greater heap of leaves than was any ways thought of, and has perhaps fatigu'd the reader equally with the penner of it: yet can we not diſmiſs him, nor lay down our pen, 'till one article more has been enquir'd into, which ſeems no leſs proper for the diſcuſſion of this place, than one which we have inſerted before, beginning at p. 333; as we there ventur'd to ſtand up in the behalf of ſome of the quarto's and maintain their authenticity, ſo mean we to have the hardineſs here to defend ſome certain plays in this collection from the attacks of a number of writers who have thought fit to call in queſtion their genuineneſs: the plays conteſted are—*The Three Parts of Henry VI.*; *Love's Labour's Loſt*; *The Taming of the Shrew*; and *Titus Andronicus*; and the ſum of what is brought againſt them, ſo far at leaſt as is hitherto come to knowledge, may be all ultimately reſolv'd into the ſole opinion of their unworthineſs, excluſive of ſome weak ſurmiſes which do not deſerve a notice: it is therefore fair and allowable, by all laws of duelling, to oppoſe opinion to opinion; which if we can ſtrengthen with reaſons, and ſomething

like proofs, which are totally wanting on the other ſide, the laſt opinion may chance to carry the day.

To begin then with the firſt of them, the *Henry VI.* in three parts. We are quite in the dark as to when the firſt part was written; but ſhould be apt to conjecture, that it was ſome conſiderable time after the other two; and, perhaps, when thoſe two were re-touch'd, and made a little fitter than they are in their firſt draught to rank with the author's other plays which he has fetch'd from our Engliſh hiſtory: and thoſe two parts, even with all their re-touchings, being ſtill much inferior to the other plays of that claſs, he may reaſonably be ſuppos'd to have underwrit himſelf on purpoſe in the firſt, that it might the better match with thoſe it belong'd to: now that theſe two plays (the firſt draughts of them, at leaſt,) are among his early performances, we know certainly from their date; which is further confirm'd by the two concluding lines of his *Henry V.* ſpoken by the Chorus; and (poſſibly) it were not going too far, to imagine—that they are his ſecond attempt in hiſtory, and near in time to his original *King John*, which is alſo in two parts: and, if this be ſo, we may ſafely pronounce them his, and even highly worthy of him; it being certain, that there was no Engliſh play upon the ſtage, at that time, which can come at all in competition with them; and this probably it was, which procur'd them the good reception that is mention'd too in the Chorus. The plays we are now ſpeaking of have been inconceiveably mangl'd either in the copy or the preſs, or perhaps both: yet this may be diſcover'd in them,—that the alterations made afterwards by

the author are nothing near ſo conſiderable as thoſe in ſome other plays; the incidents, the characters, every principal outline in ſhort being the ſame in both draughts; ſo that what we ſhall have occaſion to ſay of the ſecond, may, in ſome degree, and without much violence, be apply'd alſo to the firſt: and this we preſume to ſay of it;—that, low as it muſt be ſet in compariſon with his other plays, it has beauties in it, and grandeurs, of which no other author was capable but Shakſpeare only: that extreamly-affecting ſcene of the death of young Rutland, that of his father which comes next it, and of Clifford the murtherer of them both; Beaufort's dreadful exit, the exit of King Henry, and a ſcene of wondrous ſimplicity and wondrous tenderneſs united, in which that Henry is made a ſpeaker, while his laſt deciſive battle is fighting,—are as ſo many ſtamps upon theſe plays; by which his property is mark'd, and himſelf declar'd the owner of them, beyond controverſy as we think: and though we have ſelected theſe paſſages only, and recommended them to obſervation, it had been eaſy to name abundance of others which bear his mark as ſtrongly: and one circumſtance there is that runs through all the three plays, by which he is as ſurely to be known as by any other that can be thought of; and that is,—the preſervation of character: all the perſonages in them are diſtinctly and truly delineated, and the character given them ſuſtain'd uniformly throughout; the enormous Richard's particularly, which in the third of theſe plays is ſeen riſing towards it's zenith: and who ſees not the future monſter, and acknowledges at the ſame time the pen that drew it, in theſe two lines only, ſpoken over a king who lies ſtab'd before him,—

" What, will the aſpiring blood of Lancaſter
" Sink in the ground? I thought, it would have
mounted."

let him never pretend diſcernment hereafter in any caſe of this nature.

It is hard to perſuade one's ſelf, that the objecters to the play which comes next are indeed ſerious in their opinion; for if he is not viſible in *Love's Labour's Loſt*, we know not in which of his comedies he can be ſaid to be ſo: the eaſe and ſprightlineſs of the dialogue in very many parts of it; it's quick turns of wit, and the humour it abounds in; and (chiefly) in thoſe truly comick characters, the pedant and his companion, the page, the conſtable, Coſtard, and Armado,—ſeem more than ſufficient to prove Shakſpeare the author of it: and for the blemiſhes of this play, we muſt ſeek the true cauſe in it's antiquity; which we may venture to carry higher than 1598, the date of it's firſt impreſſion: rime, when this play appear'd, was thought a beauty of the drama, and heard with ſingular pleaſure by an audience who but a few years before, had been accuſtom'd to all rime; and the meaſure we call dogrel, and are ſo much offended with, had no ſuch effect upon the ears of that time: but whether blemiſhes or no, however this matter be which we have brought to exculpate him, neither of theſe articles can with any face of juſtice be alledg'd againſt *Love's Labour's Loſt*, ſeeing they are both to be met with in ſeveral other plays, the genuineneſs of which has not been queſtion'd by any one. And one thing more ſhall be obſerv'd in the behalf of this play;—that the author himſelf was ſo little diſpleas'd at leaſt with ſome parts of it, that he has brought them a ſecond time

upon the ſtage; for who may not perceive that his famous Benedick and Beatrice are but little more than the counter-parts of Biron and Roſaline? All which circumſtances conſider'd, and that eſpecially of the writer's childhood (as it may be term'd) when this comedy was produc'd, we may confidently pronounce it his true offspring, and replace it amongſt it's brethren.

That the *Taming of the Shrew* ſhould ever have been put into this claſs of plays, and adjudg'd a ſpurious one, may juſtly be reckon'd wonderful, when we conſider it's merit, and the reception it has generally met with in the world: it's ſucceſs at firſt, and the eſteem it was then held in, induc'd Fletcher to enter the liſts with it in another play, in which Petruchio is humbl'd and Catharine triumphant; and we have it in his works, under the title of "*The Woman's Prize, or, the Tamer tam'd:*" but, by an unhappy miſtake of buffoonery for humour and obſcenity for wit, which was not uncommon with that author, his production came lamely off, and was ſoon conſign'd to the oblivion in which it is now bury'd; whereas this of his antagoniſt flouriſhes ſtill, and has maintain'd its place upon the ſtage (in ſome ſhape or other) from its very firſt appearance down to the preſent hour: and this ſucceſs it has merited, by true wit and true humour; a fable of very artful conſtruction, much buſineſs, and highly intereſting; and by natural and well-ſuſtain'd characters, which no pen but Shakſpeare's was capable of drawing: what defects it has, are chiefly in the diction; the ſame (indeed) with thoſe of the play that was laſt-mention'd, and to be accounted for the ſame way: for we are ſtrongly inclin'd to believe it a neighbour in time to *Love's Labour's Loſt*, though we

want the proofs of it which we have luckily for that.[2]

But the plays which we have already ſpoke of are but ſlightly attack'd, and by few writers, in compariſon of this which we are now come to of "*Titus Andronicus*;" commentators, editors, every one (in ſhort) who has had to do with Shakſpeare, unite all in condemning it,—as a very bundle of horrors, totally unfit for the ſtage, and unlike the poet's manner, and even the ſtyle of his other pieces; all which allegations are extreamly true, and we readily admit of them, but can not admit the concluſion—that, therefore, it is not his; and ſhall now proceed to give the reaſons of our diſſent, but (firſt) the play's age muſt be enquir'd into. In the Induction to Jonſon's *Bartholomew Fair*, which was written in the year 1614, the audience is thus accoſted:—"Hee that will ſweare, *Jeronimo*, or *Andronicus* are the beſt playes, yet, ſhall paſſe unexcepted at, heere, as a man whoſe judgement ſhewes it is conſtant, and hath ſtood ſtill, theſe five and twentie, or thirty yeeres. Though it be an *ignorance*, it is a vertuous and ſtay'd ignorance; and next to *truth*, a confirm'd errour does well; ſuch a one the *author* knowes where to finde him." We have here the great Ben himſelf, joining this play with *Jeronimo, or, the Spaniſh Tragedy*, and bearing expreſs teſtimony to the credit

[2] The authenticity of this play ſtands further confirm'd by the teſtimony of Sir Aſton Cockayn; a writer who came near to Shakſpeare's time, and does expreſsly aſcribe it to him in an epigram addreſs'd to Mr. Clement Fiſher of Wincot; but it is (perhaps, ſuperfluous, and of but little weight neither, as it will be ſaid—that Sir Aſton proceeds only upon the evidence of it's being in print in his name: we do therefore lay no great ſtreſs upon it, nor ſhall inſert the epigram; it will be found in *The School of Shakſpeare*, which is the proper place for things of that ſort.

they were both in with the publick at the time they were written; but this is by the by; to aſcertain that time, was the chief reaſon for inſerting the quotation, and there we ſee it fix'd to twenty-five or thirty years prior to this Induction: now it is not neceſſary, to ſuppoſe that Jonſon ſpeaks in this place with exact preciſion; but allowing that he does, the firſt of theſe periods carries us back to 1589, a date not very repugnant to what is afterwards advanc'd: Langbaine, in his *Account of the Engliſh dramatick Poets*, under the article—SHAKSPEARE, does expreſsly tell us,—that "*Andronicus* was firſt printed in 1594, quarto, and acted by the Earls of Derby, Pembroke, and Eſſex, their ſervants;" and though the edition is not now to be met with, and he who mentions it be no exact writer, nor greatly to be rely'd on in many of his articles, yet in this which we have quoted he is ſo very particular that one can hardly withhold aſſent to it; eſpecially, as this account of it's printing coincides well enough with Jonſon's æra of writing this play; to which therefore we ſubſcribe, and go on upon that ground. The books of that time afford ſtrange examples of the barbariſm of the publick taſte both upon the ſtage and elſewhere: a conceited one of John Lilly's ſet the whole nation a madding; and, for a while, every pretender to politeneſs "parl'd Euphuiſm," as it was phras'd, and no writings would go down with them but ſuch as were pen'd in that fantaſtical manner: the ſetter-up of this faſhion try'd it alſo in comedy; but ſeems to have miſcarry'd in that, and for this plain reaſon: the people who govern theatres are, the middle and lower orders of the world; and theſe expected laughter in comedies, which this ſtuff of Lilly's was incapable of exci-

ting: but ſome other writers, who roſe exactly at that time, ſucceeded better in certain tragical performances, though as outrageous to the full in their way, and as remote from nature, as theſe comick ones of Lilly; for falling in with that innate love of blood which has been often objected to Britiſh audiences, and chooſing fables of horror which they made horrider ſtill by their manner of handling them, they produc'd a ſet of monſters that are not to be parallel'd in all the annals of play-writing; yet they were receiv'd with applauſe, and were the favourites of the publick for almoſt ten years together ending at 1595: many plays of this ſtamp, it is probable, have periſh'd; but thoſe that are come down to us, are as follows;—"*The Wars of Cyrus*; *Tamburlaine the Great, in two parts*; *The Spaniſh Tragedy, likewiſe in two parts*; *Soliman and Perſeda*; *and Selimus, a tragedy*;"[3] which whoever

[3] No evidence has occur'd to prove exactly the time theſe plays were written, except that paſſage of Jonſon's which relates to *Jeronimo*; but the editions we have read them in, are as follows: *Tamburlaine* in 1593; *Selimus*, and *The Wars of Cyrus*, in 1594; and *Soliman and Perſeda*, in 1599; the other without a date, but as early as the earlieſt: they are alſo without a name of author; nor has any book been met with to inſtruct us in that particular, except only for *Jeronimo*; which we are told by Heywood, in his *Apology for Actors*, was written by Thomas Kyd; author, or tranſlator rather, (for it is taken from the French of Robert Garnier,) of another play, intitl'd—*Cornelia*, printed likewiſe in 1594. Which of theſe extravagant plays had the honour to lead the way, we can't tell, but *Jeronimo* ſeems to have the beſt pretenſions to it; as *Selimus* has above all his other brethren, to bearing away the palm for blood and murther: this curious piece has theſe lines for a concluſion:—

"If this firſt part Gentles, do like you well,
"The ſecond part, ſhall greater murthers tell."

but whether the audience had enough of it, or how it has happen'd we can't tell, but no ſuch ſecond part is to be found. All theſe plays were the conſtant butt of the poets who came imme-

has means of coming at, and can have patience to examine, will ſee evident tokens of a faſhion then prevailing, which occaſion'd all theſe plays to be caſt in the ſame mold. Now, Shakſpeare, whatever motives he might have in ſome other parts of it, at this period of his life wrote certainly for profit; and ſeeing it was to be had in this way, (and this way only, perhaps,) he fell in with the current, and gave his ſorry auditors a piece to their tooth in this conteſted play of *Titus Andronicus*; which as it came out at the ſame time with the plays above-mention'd, is moſt exactly like them in almoſt every particular; their very numbers, conſiſting all of ten ſyllables with hardly any redundant, are copy'd by this Proteus, who could put on any ſhape that either ſerv'd his intereſt or ſuited his inclination: and this, we hope, is a fair and unforc'd way of accounting for "*Andronicus*;" and may convince the moſt prejudic'd—that Shakſpeare might be the writer of it; as he might alſo of *Locrine* which is aſcrib'd to him, a ninth tragedy, in form and time agreeing perfectly with the others. But to conclude this article,—However he may be cenſur'd as raſh or ill-judging, the editor ventures to declare—that he himſelf wanted not the conviction of the foregoing argument to be ſatisfy'd who the play belongs to; for though a work of imitation, and conforming itſelf to models truly execrable throughout, yet the genius of its author breaks forth in ſome places, and, to the editor's eye, Shakſpeare ſtands confeſs'd: the third act in particular may be read with admiration even

diately after them, and of Shakſpeare amongſt the reſt; and by their ridicule the town at laſt was made ſenſible of their ill judgment, and the theatre was purg'd of theſe monſters.

by the moſt delicate; who, if they are not without feelings, may chance to find themſelves touch'd by it with ſuch paſſions as tragedy ſhould excite, that is—terror, and pity. The reader will pleaſe to obſerve—that all theſe conteſted plays are in the folio, which is dedicated to the poet's patrons and friends, the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, by editors who are ſeemingly honeſt men, and profeſs themſelves dependant upon thoſe noblemen; to whom therefore they would hardly have had the confidence to preſent forgeries, and pieces ſuppoſititious; in which too they were liable to be detected by thoſe identical noble perſons themſelves, as well as by a very great part of their other readers and auditors: which argument, though of no little ſtrength in itſelf, we omitted to bring before, as having better (as we thought) and more forcible to offer; but it had behov'd thoſe gentlemen who have queſtion'd the plays to have got rid of it in the firſt inſtance, as it lies full in their way in the very entrance upon this diſpute.

We ſhall cloſe this part of the Introduction with ſome obſervations, that were reſerv'd for this place, upon that paragraph of the player editors' preface which is quoted at p. 330; and then taking this further liberty with the reader,—to call back his attention to ſome particulars that concern the preſent edition, diſmiſs him to be entertain'd (as we hope) by a ſort of appendix, conſiſting of thoſe notes that have been mention'd, in which the true and undoubted originals of almoſt all the poet's fables are clearly pointed out. But firſt of the preface. Beſides the authenticity of all the ſeveral pieces that make up this collection, and their care in publiſhing them, both ſolemnly affirm'd in the paragraph refer'd to, we there find theſe honeſt

editors acknowledging in terms equally ſolemn the author's right in his copies, and lamenting that he had not exercis'd that right by a publication of them during his life-time; and from the manner in which they expreſs themſelves, we are ſtrongly inclin'd to think—that he had really form'd ſuch a deſign, but towards his laſt days, and too late to put it in execution: a collection of Jonſon's was at that inſtant in the preſs, and upon the point of coming forth; which might probably inſpire ſuch a thought into him and his companions, and produce conferences between them—about a ſimilar publication from him, and the pieces that ſhould compoſe it, which the poet might make a liſt of. It is true, this is only a ſuppoſition; but a ſuppoſition ariſing naturally, as we think, from the incident that has been mention'd, and the expreſſions of his fellow players and editors: and, if ſuffer'd to paſs for truth, here is a good and ſound reaſon for the excluſion of all thoſe other plays that have been attributed to him upon ſome grounds or other;—he himſelf has proſcrib'd them; and we cannot forbear hoping, that they will in no future time riſe up againſt him, and be thruſt into his works: a diſavowal of weak and idle pieces, the productions of green years, wantonneſs, or inattention, is a right that all authors are veſted with; and ſhould be exerted by all, if their reputation is dear to them; had Jonſon us'd it, his character had ſtood higher than it does. But, after all, they who have pay'd attention to this truth are not always ſecure; the indiſcreet zeal of an admirer, or avarice of a publiſher, has frequently added things that diſhonour them; and where realities have been wanting, forgeries ſupply the place; thus has Homer his *Hymns*, and the poor *Mantuan* his *Ciris*

and his *Culex*. Noble and great authors demand all our veneration: where their wills can be diſcover'd, they ought ſacredly to be comply'd with; and that editor ill diſcharges his duty, who preſumes to load them with things they have renounc'd: it happens but too often, that we have other ways to ſhew our regard to them; their own great want of care in their copies, and the ſtill greater want of it that is commonly in their impreſſions, will find ſufficient exerciſe for any one's friendſhip, who may wiſh to ſee their works ſet forth in that perfection which was intended by the author. And this friendſhip we have endeavour'd to ſhew to Shakſpeare in the preſent edition: the plan of it has been lay'd before the reader; upon whom it reſts to judge finally of its goodneſs, as well as how it is executed: but as ſeveral matters have interven'd that may have driven it from his memory; and we are deſirous above all things to leave a ſtrong impreſſion upon him of one merit which it may certainly pretend to, that is—it's fidelity; we ſhall take leave to remind him, at parting, that—Throughout all this work, what is added without the authority of ſome ancient edition, is printed in a black letter: what alter'd, and what thrown out, conſtantly taken notice of; ſome few times in a note, where the matter was long, or of a complex nature;[4] but, more generally, at the bottom of the

[4] The particulars that could not well be pointed out below, according to the general method, or otherwiſe than by a note, are of three ſorts;—omiſſions, any thing large; tranſpoſitions; and ſuch differences of punctuation as produce great changes in the ſenſe of a paſſage: inſtances of the firſt occur in *Love's Labour's Loſt*, p. 54, and in *Troilus and Creſſida*, p. 109 and 117; of the ſecond, in *The Comedy of Errors*, p. 62, and in *Richard III.* p. 92, and 102; and *The Tempeſt*, p. 69, and *King*

page; where what is put out of the text, how minute and inſignificant ſoever, is always to be met with; what alter'd, as conſtantly ſet down, and in the proper words of that edition upon which the alteration is form'd: and, even in authoriz'd readings, whoever is deſirous of knowing further, what edition is follow'd preferably to the others, may be gratify'd too in that, by conſulting the Various Readings; which are now finiſh'd; and will be publiſh'd, together with the Notes, in ſome other volumes, with all the ſpeed that is convenient.

ORIGIN OF SHAKSPEARE'S FABLES.

All's well that ends well.

The fable of this play is taken from a novel, of which Boccace is the original author; in whoſe *Decameron* it may be ſeen at p. 97.[b] of the Giunti[*] edition, reprinted at London. But it is more than probable, that Shakſpeare read it in a book, call'd *The Palace of Pleaſure:* which is a collection of novels tranſlated from other authors, made by one William Painter, and by him firſt publiſh'd in the years 1565 and 67, in two tomes, quarto; the novel now ſpoken of, is the thirty-eighth of tome the firſt. This novel is a meagre tranſlation, not (perhaps)

Lear, p. 53, afford inſtances of the laſt; as may be ſeen by looking into any modern edition, where all thoſe paſſages ſtand nearly as in the old ones.

[All theſe references are to Mr. Capell's own edition of our author.]

immediately from Boccace, but from a French tranſlator of him: as the original is in every body's hands, it may there be ſeen—that nothing is taken from it by Shakſpeare, but ſome leading incidents of the ſerious part of his play.

Antony and Cleopatra.

This play, together with *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cæſar*, and ſome part of *Timon of Athens*, are form'd upon Plutarch's *Lives*, in the articles—*Coriolanus*, *Brutus*, *Julius Cæſar*, and *Antony*: of which lives there is a French tranſlation, of great fame, made by Amiot, Biſhop of Auxerre and great almoner of France; which, ſome few years after it's firſt appearance, was put into an Engliſh dreſs by our countryman Sir Thomas North, and publiſh'd in the year 1579, in folio. As the language of this tranſlation is pretty good, for the time; and the ſentiments, which are Plutarch's, breathe the genuine ſpirit of the ſeveral hiſtorical perſonages; Shakſpeare has, with much judgment, introduc'd no ſmall number of ſpeeches into theſe plays, in the very words of that tranſlator, turning them into verſe: which he has ſo well wrought up, and incorporated with his plays, that, what he has introduc'd, cannot be diſcover'd by any reader, 'till it is pointed out for him.

As you like it.

A novel, or (rather) paſtoral romance, intitl'd—*Euphues's Golden Legacy*, written in a very fantaſtical ſtyle by Dr. Thomas Lodge, and by him firſt publiſh'd in the year 1590, in quarto, is the foun-

dation of *As you like it*: beſides the fable, which is pretty exactly follow'd, the outlines of certain principal characters may be obſerv'd in the novel: and ſome expreſſions of the noveliſt (few, indeed, and of no great moment,) ſeem to have taken poſſeſſion of Shakſpeare's memory, and from thence crept into his play.

Comedy of Errors.

Of this play, the *Menæchmi* of Plautus is moſt certainly the original: yet the poet went not to the Latin for it; but took up with an Engliſh *Menæchmi*, put out by one W. W. in 1595, quarto. This tranſlation,—in which the writer profeſſes to have us'd ſome liberties, which he has diſtinguiſh'd by a particular mark,—is in proſe, and a very good one for the time: it furniſh'd Shakſpeare with nothing but his principal incident; as you may in part ſee by the tranſlator's argument, which is in verſe, and runs thus:

" Two twinborne ſonnes, a Sicill marchant had,
" Menechmus one, and Soſicles the other;
" The firſt his father loſt a little lad,
" The grandſire namde the latter like his brother:
" This (growne a man) long travell tooke to ſeeke,
" His brother, and to Epidamnum came,
" Where th' other dwelt inrlcht, and him ſo like,
" That citizens there take him for the ſame;
" Father, wife, neighbours, each miſtaking either,
" Much pleaſant error, ere they meete togither."

It is probable, that the laſt of theſe verſes ſuggeſted the title of Shakſpeare's play.

Cymbeline.

Boccace's ſtory of *Bernardo da Ambrogivolo*, (Day 2, Nov. 9,) is generally ſuppos'd to have furniſh'd Shakſpeare with the fable of *Cymbeline:* but the embracers of this opinion ſeem not to have been aware, that many of that author's novels (tranſlated, or imitated,) are to be found in Engliſh books, prior to, or contemporary with, Shakſpeare: and of this novel in particular, there is an imitation extant in a ſtory-book of that time, intitl'd—*Weſtward for Smelts:* it is the ſecond tale in the book: the ſcene, and the actors of it are different from Boccace, as Shakſpeare's are from both; but the main of the ſtory is the ſame in all. We may venture to pronounce it a book of thoſe times, and that early enough to have been us'd by Shakſpeare, as I am perſuaded it was; though the copy that I have of it, is no older than 1620; it is a quarto pamphlet of only five ſheets and a half, printed in a black letter: ſome reaſons for my opinion are given in another place; (v. *Winter's Tale*) though perhaps they are not neceſſary, as it may one day better be made appear a true one, by the diſcovery of ſome more ancient edition.

Hamlet.

About the middle of the ſixteenth century, Francis de Belleforeſt, a French gentleman, entertain'd his countrymen with a collection of novels, which he intitles—*Hiſtoires Tragiques*; they are in part originals, part tranſlations, and chiefly from Bandello: he began to publiſh them in the year

1564; and continu'd his publication ſucceſſively in ſeveral tomes, how many I know not; the dedication to his fifth tome is dated ſix years after. In that tome, the *troiſieme Hiſtoire* has this title; "*Avec quelle ruſe Amleth, qui depuis fut roy de Dannemarch, vengea la mort de ſon pere Horvuendille, occis par Fengon ſon frere, & autre occurrence de ſon hiſtoire.*" Painter, who has been mention'd before, compil'd his *Palace of Pleaſure* almoſt entirely from Belleforeſt, taking here and there a novel as pleas'd him, but he did not tranſlate the whole: other novels, it is probable, were tranſlated by different people, and publiſh'd ſingly; this, at leaſt, that we are ſpeaking of, was ſo, and is intitl'd—*The Hiſtorie of Hamblet*; it is in quarto, and black letter: there can be no doubt made, by perſons who are acquainted with theſe things, that the tranſlation is not much younger than the French original; though the only edition of it, that is yet come to my knowledge, is no earlier than 1608: that Shakſpeare took his play from it, there can likewiſe be very little doubt.

Henry IV.

In the eleven plays that follow,—*Macbeth*, *King John*, *Richard II.* *Henry IV.* two parts, *Henry V.* *Henry VI.* three parts, *Richard III.* and *Henry VIII.* —the hiſtorians of that time, Hall, Holinſhed, Stow, and others, (and, in particular, Holinſhed,) are pretty cloſely follow'd; and that not only for their matter, but even ſometimes in their expreſſions: the harangue of the Archbiſhop of Canterbury in *Henry V.* that of Queen Catharine in *Henry VIII.* at her trial, and the king's reply to it, are taken from thoſe chroniclers, and put into

verſe: other leſſer matters are borrow'd from them; and ſo largely ſcatter'd up and down in theſe plays, that whoever would rightly judge of the poet, muſt acquaint himſelf with thoſe authors, and his character will not ſuffer in the enquiry.

Richard III. was preceded by other plays written upon the ſame ſubject; concerning which, ſee the concluſion of a note in this Introduction, at p. 332. And as to *Henry V.*—it may not be improper to obſerve in this place, that there is extant another old play, call'd *The famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, printed in 1617, quarto; perhaps by ſome tricking bookſeller, who meant to impoſe it upon the world for Shakſpeare's, who dy'd the year before. This play, which opens with that prince's wildneſs and robberies before he came to the crown, and ſo comprehends ſomething of the ſtory of both parts of *Henry IV.* as well as of *Henry V.*—is a very medley of nonſenſe and ribaldry; and, it is my firm belief, was prior to Shakſpeare's *Henries*; and the identical "diſpleaſing play" mention'd in the epilogue to 2 *Henry IV.*; for that ſuch a play ſhould be written after his, or receiv'd upon any ſtage, has no face of probability. There is a character in it, call'd—Sir John Oldcaſtle; who holds there the place of Sir John Falſtaff, but his very antipodes in every other particular, for it is all dullneſs: and it is to this character that Shakſpeare alludes, in thoſe much-diſputed paſſages; one in his *Henry IV.* p. 194, and the other in the epilogue to his ſecond part; where the words "for Oldcaſtle dy'd a martyr" hint at this miſerable performance, and it's fate, which was—damnation.

King Lear.

Lear's diſtreſsful ſtory has been often told in poems, ballads, and chronicles: but to none of theſe are we indebted for Shakſpeare's *Lear*; but to a ſilly old play which firſt made its appearance in 1605, the title of which is as follows:—"The | True Chronicle Hi- | ſtory of King LEIR, and his three | *daughters, Gonorill, Ragan,* | *and Cordella.* As it hath bene divers and ſundry | times lately acted. | LONDON, | Printed by Simon Stafford for John | Wright, and are to bee ſold at his ſhop at | Chriſtes Church dore, next Newgate- | Market. 1605. (4° I. 4^{b}.)—As it is a great curioſity, and very ſcarce, the title is here inſerted at large: and for the ſame reaſon, and alſo to ſhew the uſe that Shakſpeare made of it, ſome extracts will now be added.

The author of this *Leir* has kept him cloſe to the chronicles; for he ends his play with the reinſtating King Leir in his throne, by the aid of Cordella and her huſband. But take the entire fable in his own words. Towards the end of the play, at ſignature H 3, you find Leir in France: upon whoſe coaſt he and his friend Perillus are landed in ſo neceſſitous a condition, that, having nothing to pay their paſſage, the mariners take their cloaks, leaving them their jerkins in exchange: thus attir'd, they go up further into the country; and there, when they are at the point to periſh by famine, inſomuch that Perillus offers Leir his arm to feed upon, they light upon Gallia and his queen, whom the author has brought down thitherward, in progreſs, diſguis'd. Their diſcourſe is overheard by Cordella, who immediately knows them; but,

at her huſband's perſuaſion, forbears to diſcover herſelf a while, relieves them with food, and then aſks their ſtory; which Leir gives her in theſe words:

" *Leir.* Then know this firſt, I am a Brittayne borne,
" And had three daughters by one loving wife:
" And though I ſay it, of beauty they were ſped;
" Eſpecially the youngeſt of the three,
" For her perfections hardly matcht could be:
" On theſe I doted with a jelous love,
" And thought to try which of them lov'd me beſt,
" By aſking of them, which would do moſt for me?
" The firſt and ſecond flattred me with words,
" And vowd they lov'd me better then their lives:
" The youngeſt ſayd, ſhe loved me as a child
" Might do: her anſwere I eſteem'd moſt vild,
" And preſently in an outragious mood,
" I turnd her from me to go ſinke or ſwym:
" And all I had, even to the very clothes,
" I gave in dowry with the other two:
" And ſhe that beſt deſerv'd the greateſt ſhare,
" I gave her nothing, but diſgrace and care.
" Now mark the ſequell: When I had done thus,
" I ſoiourned in my eldeſt daughters houſe,
" Where for a time I was intreated well,
" And liv'd in ſtate ſufficing my content:
" But every day her kindneſſe did grow cold,
" Which I with patience put up well ynough
" And ſeemed not to ſee the things I ſaw:
" But at the laſt ſhe grew ſo far incenſt
" With moody fury, and with cauſeleſſe hate,
" That in moſt vild and contumelious termes,
" She bade me pack, and harbour ſome where elſe
" Then was I fayne for refuge to repayre
" Unto my other daughter for reliefe,
" Who gave me pleaſing and moſt courteous words;
" But in her actions ſhewed her ſelfe ſo ſore,
" As never any daughter did before:
" She prayd me in a morning out betime,
" To go to a thicket two miles from the court,
" Poynting that there ſhe would come talke with me.
" There ſhe had ſet a ſhaghayrd murdring wretch,

" To maſſacre my honeſt friend and me.
" *
" And now I am conſtraind to ſeeke reliefe
" Of her to whom I have bin ſo unkind;
" Whoſe cenſure, if it do award me death,
" I muſt confeſſe ſhe payes me but my due:
" But if ſhe ſhew a loving daughters part,
" It comes of God and her, not my deſert.
" *Cor.* No doubt ſhe will, I dare be ſworne ſhe will."

Thereupon enſues her diſcovery; and, with it, a circumſtance of ſome beauty, which Shakſpeare has borrow'd—(v. *Lear*, p. 565,) their kneeling to each other, and mutually contending which ſhould aſk forgiveneſs. The next page preſents us Gallia, and Mumford who commands under him, marching to embarque their forces, to re-inſtate Leir; and the next, a ſea-port in Britain, and officers ſetting a watch, who are to fire a beacon to give notice if any ſhips approach, in which there is ſome low humour that is paſſable enough. Gallia and his forces arrive, and take the town by ſurprize: immediately upon which, they are encounter'd by the forces of the two elder ſiſters, and their huſbands: a battle enſues: Leir conquers; he and his friends enter victorious, and the play cloſes thus:—

" Thanks (worthy Mumford) to thee laſt of all,
" Not greeted laſt, 'cauſe thy deſert was ſmall;
" No, thou haſt lion-like lay'd on to-day,
" Chaſing the Cornwall King and Cambria;
" Who with my daughters, daughters did I ſay?
" To ſave their lives, the fugitives did play.
" Come, ſonne and daughter, who did me advance,
" Repoſe with me awhile, and then for Fraunce."
[*Exeunt.*

Such is the *Leir*, now before us. Who the author of it ſhould be, I cannot ſurmiſe; for neither

in manner nor ſtyle has it the leaſt reſemblance to any of the other tragedies of that time: moſt of them riſe now and then, and are poetical; but this creeps in one dull tenour, from beginning to end, after the ſpecimen here inſerted: it ſhould ſeem he was a Latiniſt, by the tranſlation following:

> " Feare not, my lord, the perfit good indeed,
> " Can never be corrupted by the bad:
> " A new freſh veſſell ſtill retaynes the taſte
> " Of that which firſt is powr'd into the ſame:" [ſign. H.

But whoever he was, Shakſpeare has done him the honour to follow him in a ſtroke or two: one has been obſerv'd upon above; and the reader, who is acquainted with Shakſpeare's *Lear*, will perceive another in the ſecond line of the concluding ſpeech: and here is a third; " Knoweſt thou theſe letters?" ſays Leir to Ragan, (ſign. I. 3^{b}.) ſhewing her hers and her ſiſter's letters commanding his death; upon which, ſhe ſnatches at the letters, and tears them: (v. *Lear*, p. 590, 591,) another, and that a moſt ſignal one upon one account, occurs at ſignature C 3^{b}:

> " But he, the myrrour of mild patience,
> " Puts up all wrongs, and never gives reply:"

Perillus ſays this of Leir; comprizing therein his character, as drawn by this author: how oppoſite to that which Shakſpeare has given him, all know; and yet he has found means to put nearly the ſame words into the very mouth of his *Lear*,—

> " No, I will be the pattern of all patience,
> " I will ſay nothing."

Laſtly, two of Shakſpeare's perſonages, Kent, and the Steward, ſeem to owe their exiſtence to the above-mention'd "ſhag-hair'd wretch," and the Perillus of this *Leir*.

The epiſode of Gloſter and his two ſons is taken from the *Arcadia:* in which romance there is a chapter thus intitl'd;—"*The pitifull ſtate, and ſtorie of the* Paphlagonian *unkinde King, and his kind ſonne, firſt related by the ſon, then by the blind father.*" (*Arcadia*, p. 142, edit. 1590, 4to.) of which epiſode there are no traces in either chronicle, poem, or play, wherein this hiſtory is handl'd.

Love's Labour's Loſt.

The fable of this play does not ſeem to be a work entirely of invention; and I am apt to believe, that it owes its birth to ſome novel or other, which may one day be diſcover'd. The character of Armado has ſome reſemblance to Don Quixote; but the play is older than that work of Cervantes: of Holofernes, another ſingular character, there are ſome faint traces in a maſque of Sir Philip Sidney's that was preſented before Queen Elizabeth at Wanſted: this maſque, call'd in catalogues—*The Lady of May*, is at the end of that author's works, edit. 1627. folio.

Meaſure for Meaſure.

In the year 1578, was publiſh'd in a black-letter quarto a miſerable dramatick performance, in two parts, intitl'd—*Promos and Caſſandra*; written by one George Whetſtone, author likewiſe of the *Heptameron*, and much other poetry of the ſame

ſtamp, printed about that time. Theſe plays their author, perhaps, might form upon a novel of Cinthio's; (v. Dec. 8, Nov. 5,) which Shakſpeare went not to, but took up with Whetſtone's fable, as is evident from the argument of it; which, though it be ſomewhat of the longeſt, yet take it in his own words.

" The Argument of the whole *Hiſtorye.*

" In the Cyttie of Julio (ſometimes under the dominion of Corvinus Kinge of Hungarie and Boemia) there was a law, that what man ſo ever committed adultery, ſhould loſe his head, & the woman offender, ſhould weare ſome diſguiſed apparel, during her life, to make her infamouſlye noted. This ſevere lawe, by the favour of ſome mercifull magiſtrate, became little regarded, untill the time of Lord Promos auctority: who convicting, a yong gentleman named Andrugio of incontinency, condemned, both him, and his minion to the execution of this ſtatute. Andrugio had a very vertuous, and beawtiful gentlewoman to his ſiſter, named Caſſandra: Caſſandra to enlarge her brothers life, ſubmitted an humble petition to the Lord Promos: Promos regarding her good behaviours, and fantaſying her great beawtie, was much delighted with the ſweete order of her talke: and doyng good, that evill might come thereof: for a time, he repryv'd her brother: but wicked man, tourning his liking unto unlawfull luſt, he ſet downe the ſpoile of her honour, raunſome for her Brothers life: Chaſte Caſſandra, abhorring both him and his ſute, by no perſwaſion would yeald to

this raunſome. But in fine, wonne with the importunitye of hir brother (pleading for life:) upon theſe conditions ſhe agreed to Promos. Firſt that he ſhould pardon her brother, and after marry her. Promos as fearles in promiſſe, as careleſſe in performance, with ſollemne vowe, ſygned her conditions: but worſe than any Infydel, his will ſatisfyed, he performed neither the one nor the other: for to keepe his aucthoritye, unſpotted with favour, and to prevent Caſſandraes clamors, he commaunded the Gayler ſecretly, to preſent Caſſandra with her brother's head. The Gayler, with the outcryes of Andrugio, (abhorryng Promos lewdnes,) by the providence of God, provided thus for his ſafety. He preſented Caſſandra with a felons head newlie executed, who, (being mangled, knew it not from her brothers, by the Gayler, who was ſet at libertie) was ſo agreeved at this trecherye, that at the pointe to kyl her ſelfe, ſhe ſpared that ſtroke, to be avenged of Promos. And devyſing a way, ſhe concluded, to make her fortunes knowne unto the kinge. She (executing this reſolution) was ſo highly favoured of the King, that forthwith he haſted to do juſtice on Promos: whoſe judgement was, to marrye Caſſandra, to repaire her craſed Honour: which donne, for his hainous offence he ſhould loſe his head. This maryage ſolempniſed, Caſſandra tyed in the greateſt bondes of affection to her huſband, became an earneſt ſuter for his life: the Kinge (tendringe the generall benefit of the cōmon weale, before her ſpecial caſe, although he favoured her much) would not graunt her ſute. Andrugio (diſguiſed amonge the company) ſorrowing the griefe of his ſiſter, bewrayde his ſafety, and craved pardon. The Kinge, to renowne the vertues of Caſſandra, pardoned both

him, and Promos. The circumſtances of this rare Hiſtorye, in action livelye foloweth."

The play itſelf opens thus:—

"*Actus I. Scena* 1.

"Promos, Mayor, Shirife, Sworde bearer: One with a bunche of keyes: Phallax, Promos man.

"Yon Officers which now in Julio ſtaye,
"Knowe you our leadge, the Kinge of Hungarie:
"Sent me Promos, to ioyne with you in ſway:
"That ſtill we may to Juſtice have an eye.
"And now to ſhow, my rule & power at lardge,
"Attentivelie, his Letters Pattents heare:
"Phallax reade out my Soveraines chardge,
"Phal. As you commande, I wyll: give heedful eare.

"*Phallax readeth the Kinges Letters Patents, which muſt be fayre written in parchment, with ſome great counterfeat zeale.*

"Pro. Loe, here you ſee what is our Soveraignes wyl,
"Loe, heare his wiſh, that right, not might, beare ſwaye:
"Loe, heare his care, to weed from good the yll,
"To ſcourge the wights, good Lawes that diſobay."

And thus it proceeds; without one word in it, that Shakſpeare could make uſe of, or can be read with patience by any man living: and yet, beſides the characters appearing in the argument, his Bawd Clown, Lucio, Juliet, and the Provoſt, nay, and even his Barnardine, are created out of hints which this play gave him; and the lines too that are quoted, bad as they are, ſuggeſted to him the manner in which his own play opens.

Merchant of Venice.

The *Jew of Venice* was a ſtory exceedingly well known in Shakſpeare's time; celebrated in ballads; and taken (perhaps) originally from an Italian book

intitl'd—*Il Pecorone:* the author of which calls himſelf,—Ser Giovanni Fiorentino; and writ his book, as he tells you in ſome humorous verſes at the beginning of it, in 1378, three years after the death of Boccace; it is divided into *giornata's*, and the ſtory we are ſpeaking of is in the firſt novel of the *giornata quarta*; edit. 1565, octavo, *in Vinegia*. This novel Shakſpeare certainly read; either in the original, or (which I rather think) in ſome tranſlation that is not now to be met with, and form'd his play upon it. It was tranſlated anew, and made publick in 1755, in a ſmall octavo pamphlet, printed for M. Cooper: and, at the end of it, a novel of Boccace; (the firſt of day the tenth) which, as the tranſlator rightly judges, might poſſibly produce the ſcene of the caſkets, ſubſtituted by the poet in place of one in the other novel, that was not proper for the ſtage.

Merry Wives of Windſor.

"Queen Elizabeth," ſays a writer of Shakſpeare's life, "was ſo well pleas'd with that admirable character of Falſtaff, in the two parts of *Henry the Fourth*, that ſhe commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to ſhew him in love. This is ſaid to be the occaſion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windſor*." As there is no proof brought for the truth of this ſtory, we may conclude—that it is either ſome playhouſe tradition, or had its riſe from Sir William D'Avenant, whoſe authority the writer quotes for another ſingular anecdote, relating to lord Southampton. Be this as it may; Shakſpeare, in the conduct of Falſtaff's love-adventures, made uſe of ſome incidents in a book that has been mention'd before, call'd—*Il Pecorone*; they are in

the ſecond novel of that book. It is highly probable, that this novel likewiſe is in an old Engliſh dreſs ſomewhere or other; and from thence tranſplanted into a fooliſh book, call'd—*The fortunate, the deceiv'd, and the unfortunate Lovers*; printed in 1685, octavo, for William Whittwood; where the reader may ſee it, at p. 1. Let me add too, that there is a like ſtory in the—" *Piacevoli Notti, di* Straparola, *libro primo*; at *Notte quarta, Favola quarta*; edit. 1567, octavo, *in Vinegia.*

Midſummer-Night's Dream.

The hiſtory of our old poets is ſo little known, and the firſt editions of their works become ſo very ſcarce, that it is hard pronouncing any thing certain about them: but, if that pretty fantaſtical poem of Drayton's, call'd—*Nymphidia, or The Court of Fairy*, be early enough in time, (as, I believe, it is; for I have ſeen an edition of that author's paſtorals, printed in 1593, quarto,) it is not improbable, that Shakſpeare took from thence the hint of his fairies: a line of that poem, " Thorough buſh, thorough briar," occurs alſo in his play. The reſt of the play is, doubtleſs, invention: the names only of Theſeus, Hippolita, and Theſeus' former loves, Antiopa and others, being hiſtorical; and taken from the tranſlated Plutarch, in the article—Theſeus.

Much Ado about Nothing.

" Timbree de Cardône deviēt amoureux à Meſſine de Fenicie Leonati, & des divers & eſtranges accidens qui advindrēt avāt qu'il l' eſpouſaſt."—is the title of another novel in the *Hiſtoires Tragiques* of Belle-

foreſt; Tom. 3. Hiſt. 18: it is taken from one of Bandello's, which you may ſee in his firſt tome, at p. 150, of the London edition in quarto, a copy from that of Lucca in 1554. This French novel comes the neareſt to the fable of *Much Ado about Nothing*, of any thing that has yet been diſcovered, and is (perhaps) the foundation of it. There is a ſtory ſomething like it in the fifth book of *Orlando Furioſo:* (v. Sir John Harrington's tranſlation of it, edit. 1591, folio) and another in Spencer's *Fairy Queen.*

Othello.

Cinthio, the beſt of the Italian writers next to Boccace, has a novel thus intitl'd:—"Un Capitano Moro piglia per mogliera una cittadina venetiana, un ſuo Alfieri l'accuſa de adulterio al [*read*, il, *with a colon after*—adulterio] Marito, cerca, che l'Alfieri uccida colui, ch'egli credea l'Adultero, il Capitano uccide la Moglie, è accuſato dallo Alfieri, non confeſſà il Moro, ma eſſèndovi chiari inditii, è bandito, Et lo ſcelerato Alfieri, credendo nuocere ad altri, procaccia à sè la morte miſeramente." Hecatommithi, Dec. 3, Nov. 7; edit. 1565, two tomes, octavo. If there was no tranſlation of this novel, French or Engliſh; nor any thing built upon it, either in proſe or verſe, near enough in time for Shakſpeare to take his *Othello* from them; we muſt, I think, conclude—that he had it from the Italian; for the ſtory (at leaſt, in all it's main circumſtances) is apparently the ſame.

Romeo and Juliet.

This very affecting ſtory is likewiſe a true one; it made a great noiſe at the time it happen'd, and

was ſoon taken up by poets and novel-writers. Bandello has one; it is the ninth of tome the ſecond: and there is another, and much better, left us by ſome anonymous writer; of which I have an edition, printed in 1553 at Venice, one year before Bandello, which yet was not the firſt. Some ſmall time after, Pierre Boiſteau, a French writer, put out one upon the ſame ſubject, taken from theſe Italians, but much alter'd and enlarg'd: this novel, together with five others of Boiſteau's penning, Belleforeſt took; and they now ſtand at the beginning of his *Hiſtoires Tragiques*, edition beforemention'd. But it had ſome prior edition; which falling into the hands of a countryman of ours, he converted it into a poem; altering, and adding many things to it of his own, and publiſh'd it in 1562, without a name, in a ſmall octavo volume, printed by Richard Tottill; and this poem, which is call'd—*The Tragical Hiſtorie of Romeus and Juliet*, is the origin of Shakſpeare's play: who not only follows it even minutely in the conduct of his fable, and that in thoſe places where it differs from the other writers; but has alſo borrow'd from it ſome few thoughts, and expreſſions. At the end of a ſmall poetical miſcellany, publiſh'd by one George Turberville in 1570, there is a poem—"On the death of Maiſter Arthur Brooke drownde in paſſing to New-haven;" in which it appears, that this gentleman, (who, it is likely, was a military man,) was the writer of *Romeus and Juliet*. In the ſecond tome of *The Palace of Pleaſure*, (Nov. 25.) there is a proſe tranſlation of Boiſteau's novel; but Shakſpeare made no uſe of it.

Taming of the Shrew.

Nothing has yet been produc'd that is likely to have given the poet occaſion for writing this play, neither has it (in truth) the air of a novel, ſo that we may reaſonably ſuppoſe it a work of invention; that part of it, I mean, which gives it it's title. For one of it's underwalks, or plots,—to wit, the ſtory of Lucentio, in almoſt all it's branches, (his love-affair, and the artificial conduct of it; the pleaſant incident of the Pedant; and the characters of Vincentio, Tranio, Gremio, and Biondello,) is form'd upon a comedy of George Gaſcoigne's, call'd—*Suppoſes,* a tranſlation from Arioſto's *I Suppoſiti:* which comedy was acted by the gentlemen of Grey's Inn in 1566; and may be ſeen in the tranſlator's works, of which there are ſeveral old editions: and the odd induction of this play is taken from Goulart's *Hiſtoires admirables de notre Temps*; who relates it as a real fact, practis'd upon a mean artiſan at Bruſſels by Philip the good, duke of Burgundy. Goulart was tranſlated into Engliſh, by one Edw. Grimeſton: the edition I have of it, was printed in 1607, quarto, by George Eld; where this ſtory may be found, at p. 587: but, for any thing that there appears to the contrary, the book might have been printed before.

Tempeſt.

The *Tempeſt* has rather more of the novel in it than the play that was laſt ſpoken of: but no one has yet pretended to have met with ſuch a novel; nor any thing elſe, that can be ſuppos'd to have furniſh'd Shakſpeare with materials for writing

this play: the fable of which muſt therefore paſs for entirely his own production, 'till the contrary can be made appear by any future diſcovery. One of the poet's editors, after obſerving that—the perſons of the drama are all Italians; and the unities all regularly obſerv'd in it, a cuſtom likewiſe of the Italians; concludes his note with the mention of two of their plays,—*Il Negromante* di L. Arioſto, and *Il Negromante Palliato* di Gio. Angelo Petrucci; one or other of which, he ſeems to think, may have given riſe to the *Tempeſt*: but he is miſtaken in both of them; and the laſt muſt needs be out of the queſtion, being later than Shakſpeare's time.

Titus Andronicus.

An old ballad, whoſe date and time of writing can not be aſcertain'd, is the ground work of *Titus Andronicus*; the names of the perſons acting, and almoſt every incident of the play are there in miniature:—it is, indeed, ſo like,—that one might be tempted to ſuſpect, that the ballad was form'd upon the play, and not that upon the ballad; were it not ſufficiently known, that almoſt all the compoſitions of that ſort are prior to even the infancy of Shakſpeare.

Troilus and Creſsida.

The loves of Troilus and Creſſida are celebrated by Chaucer: whoſe poem might, perhaps, induce Shakſpeare to work them up into a play. The other matters of that play (hiſtorical, or fabulous, call them which you will,) he had out of an ancient book, written and printed firſt by Caxton, call'd

—*The Deſtruction of Troy*, in three parts: in the third part of it, are many ſtrange particulars, occurring no where elſe, which Shakſpeare has admitted into his play.

Twelfth-Night.

Another of Belleforeſt's novels is thus intitl'd:—"Comme une fille Romaine ſe veſtant en page ſerviſt long temps un ſien amy ſans eſtre cogneue, & depuis l'eut a mary avec autres divers diſcours." *Hiſtoires Tragiques*; Tom. 4, Hiſt. 7. This novel, which is itſelf taken from one of Bandello's (v. Tom. 2, Nov. 36,) is, to all appearance, the foundation of the ſerious part of *Twelfth-Night*: and muſt be ſo accounted; 'till ſome Engliſh novel appears, built (perhaps) upon that French one, but approaching nearer to Shakſpeare's comedy.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Julia's love-adventures being in ſome reſpects the ſame with thoſe of Viola in *Twelfth-Night*, the ſame novel might give riſe to them both; and Valentine's falling amongſt out-laws, and becoming their captain, is an incident that has ſome reſemblance to one in the *Arcadia*, (Book I, chap. 6.) where Pyrocles heads the Helots: all the other circumſtances which conſtitute the fable of this play, are, probably of the poet's own invention.

Winter's Tale.

To the ſtory-book, or *Pleaſant Hiſtory* (as it is call'd) *of Doraſtus and Fawnia*, written by Robert

Greene, M. A. we are indebted for Shakſpeare's *Winter's Tale.* Greene join'd with Dr. Lodge in writing a play, call'd *A Looking-Glaſs for London and England,* printed in 1598, in quarto, and black letter; and many of his other works, which are very numerous, were publiſh'd about that time, and this amongſt the reſt: it went through many impreſſions, all of the ſame form and letter as the play; and that ſo low down as the year 1664, of which year I have a copy. Upon this occaſion, I ſhall venture to pronounce an opinion, that has been reſerv'd for this place, (though other plays too were concern'd in it, as *Hamlet* and *Cymbeline*) which if it be found true, as I believe it will, may be of uſe to ſettle many diſputed points in literary chronology. My opinion is this:—that almoſt all books, of the gothick or black character, printed any thing late in the ſeventeenth century, are in truth only re-impreſſions; they having paſs'd the preſs before in the preceding century, or (at leaſt) very ſoon after. For the character began then to be diſus'd in the printing of new books: but the types remaining, the owners of them found a convenience in uſing them for books that had been before printed in them; and to this convenience of theirs are owing all or moſt of thoſe impreſſions poſterior to 1600. It is left to the reader's ſagacity, to apply this remark to the book in the preſent article; and to thoſe he finds mention'd before, in the articles—*Hamlet* and *Cymbeline.*

Such are the materials, out of which this great poet has rais'd a ſtructure, which no time ſhall efface, nor any envy be ſtrong enough to leſſen the admiration that is ſo juſtly due to it; which if it was great before, cannot fail to receive encreaſe with the judicious, when the account that has been

now given them is reflected upon duly: other originals have, indeed, been pretended; and much extraordinary criticiſm has, at different times, and by different people, been ſpun out of thoſe conceits; but, except ſome few articles in which the writer profeſſes openly his ignorance of the ſources they are drawn from, and ſome others in which he delivers himſelf doubtfully, what is ſaid in the preceding leaves concerning theſe fables may with all certainty be rely'd upon.

How much is it to be wiſh'd, that ſomething equally certain, and indeed worthy to be intitl'd—a Life of Shakſpeare, could accompany this relation, and complete the tale of thoſe pieces which the publick is apt to expect before new editions? But that nothing of this ſort is at preſent in being, may be ſaid without breach of candour, as we think, or ſuſpicion of over much niceneſs: an imperfect and looſe account of his father, and family; his own marriage, and the iſſue of it; ſome traditional ſtories,—many of them trifling in themſelves, ſupported by ſmall authority, and ſeemingly ill-grounded; together with his life's final period as gather'd from his monument, is the full and whole amount of hiſtorical matter that is in any of theſe writings; in which the critick and eſſayiſt ſwallow up the biographer, who yet ought to take the lead in them. The truth is, the occurrences of this moſt intereſting life (we mean, the private ones) are irrecoverably loſt to us; the friendly office of regiſtring them was overlook'd by thoſe who alone had it in their power, and our enquiries about them now muſt prove vain and thrown away. But there is another ſort of them that is not quite ſo hopeleſs; which beſides affording us the proſpect of ſome good iſſue to our endeavours, do alſo invi

us to them by the promiſe of a much better reward for them: the knowledge of his private life had done little more than gratify our curioſity, but his publick one as a writer would have conſequences more important; a diſcovery there would throw a new light upon many of his pieces; and, where raſhneſs only is ſhew'd in the opinions that are now current about them, a judgment might then be form'd, which perhaps would do credit to the giver of it. When he commenc'd a writer for the ſtage, and in which play; what the order of the reſt of them, and (if that be diſcoverable) what the occaſion; and, laſtly, for which of the numerous theatres that were then ſubſiſting they were ſeverally written at firſt,—are the particulars that ſhould chiefly engage the attention of a writer of Shakſpeare's Life, and be the principal ſubjects of his enquiry: to aſſiſt him in which, the firſt impreſſions of theſe plays will do ſomething, and their title-pages at large, which, upon that account, we mean to give in another work that will accompany *The School of Shakſpeare*; and ſomething the *School* itſelf will afford, that may contribute to the ſame ſervice: but the corner-ſtone of all, muſt be—the works of the poet himſelf, from which much may be extracted by a heedful peruſer of them; and, for the ſake of ſuch a peruſer, and by way of putting him into the train when the plays are before him, we ſhall inſtance in one of them; —the time in which *Henry V.* was written, is determin'd almoſt preciſely by a paſſage in the chorus to the fifth act, and the concluding chorus of it contains matter relative to *Henry VI.*: other plays might be mention'd, as *Henry VIII.* and *Macbeth*; but this one may be ſufficient to anſwer our intention in producing it, which was—to ſpirit ſome

one up to this taſk in ſome future time, by ſhewing the poſſibility of it; which he may be further convinc'd of, if he reflects what great things have been done, by criticks amongſt ourſelves, upon ſubjects of this ſort, and of a more remov'd antiquity than he is concern'd in. A Life thus conſtructed, interſpers'd with ſuch anecdotes of common notoriety as the writer's judgment ſhall tell him—are worth regard; together with ſome memorials of this poet that are happily come down to us; ſuch as, an inſtrument in the Heralds' Office, confirming arms to his father; a Patent preſerv'd in Rymer, granted by James the Firſt; his laſt Will and Teſtament, extant now at Doctors Commons; his Stratford monument, and a monument of his daughter which is ſaid to be there alſo;—ſuch a Life would riſe quickly into a volume; eſpecially, with the addition of one proper and even neceſſary epiſode—a brief hiſtory of our drama, from its origin down to the poet's death: even the ſtage he appear'd upon, it's form, dreſſings, actors ſhould be enquir'd into, as every one of thoſe circumſtances had ſome conſiderable effect upon what he compos'd for it: The ſubject is certainly a good one, and will fall (we hope) ere it be long into the hands of ſome good writer; by whoſe abilities this great want may at length be made up to us, and the world of letters enrich'd by the happy acquiſition of a maſterly *Life of Shakſpeare.* CAPELL.

MR. STEEVENS'S

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

READER.[5]

THE want of adherence to the old copies, which has been complained of, in the text of every modern republication of Shakſpeare, is fairly deducible from Mr. Rowe's inattention to one of the firſt duties of an editor.[6] Mr. Rowe did not print from the earlieſt and moſt correct, but from the moſt remote and inaccurate of the four folios. Between the years 1623 and 1685 (the dates of the

[5] Firſt printed in 1773. MALONE.

[6] "I muſt not (ſays Mr. Rowe in his dedication to the Duke of Somerſet) pretend to have reſtor'd this work to the exactneſs of the author's original manuſcripts: thoſe, are loſt, or, at leaſt, are gone beyond any enquiry I could make; ſo that there was nothing left, but to *compare the ſeveral editions*, and give the true reading as well as I could from thence. This I have endeavour'd to do pretty carefully, and render'd very many places intelligible, that were not ſo before. In ſome of the editions, eſpecially the laſt, there were many lines (and in *Hamlet* one whole ſcene) left out together; theſe are now all ſupply'd. I fear your grace will find ſome faults, but I hope they are moſtly literal, and the errors of the preſs." Would not any one, from this declaration, ſuppoſe that Mr. Rowe (who does not appear to have conſulted a ſingle quarto) had at leaſt *compared* the folios with each other? STEEVENS.

firſt and laſt) the errors in every play, at leaſt, were trebled. Several pages in each of theſe ancient editions have been examined, that the aſſertion might come more fully ſupported. It may be added, that as every freſh editor continued to make the text of his predeceſſor the ground-work of his own (never collating but where difficulties occurred) ſome deviations from the originals had been handed down, the number of which are leſſened in the impreſſion before us, as it has been conſtantly compared with the moſt authentick copies, whether collation was abſolutely neceſſary for the recovery of ſenſe, or not. The perſon who undertook this taſk may have failed by inadvertency, as well as thoſe who preceded him; but the reader may be aſſured, that he, who thought it his duty to free an author from ſuch modern and unneceſſary innovations as had been cenſured in others, has not ventured to introduce any of his own.

It is not pretended that a complete body of various readings is here collected; or that all the diverſities which the copies exhibit, are pointed out; as near two thirds of them are typographical miſtakes, or ſuch a change of inſignificant particles, as would croud the bottom of the page with an oſtentation of materials, from which at laſt nothing uſeful could be ſelected.

The dialogue might indeed ſometimes be lengthened by other inſertions than have hitherto been made, but without advantage either to its ſpirit or beauty as in the following inſtance:

"*Lear.* No.
"*Kent.* Yes.
"*Lear.* No, I ſay.
"*Kent.* I ſay, yea."

Here the quartos add:

"Lear. *No, no, they would not.*
"Kent. *Yes, they have.*"

By the admiſſion of this negation and affirmation, has any new idea been gained?

The labours of preceding editors have not left room for a boaſt, that many valuable readings have been retrieved; though it may be fairly aſſerted, that the text of Shakſpeare is reſtored to the condition in which the author, or rather his firſt publiſhers, appear to have left it, ſuch emendations as were abſolutely neceſſary, alone admitted: for where a particle, indiſpenſably neceſſary to the ſenſe was wanting, ſuch a ſupply has been ſilently adopted from other editions; but where a ſyllable, or more, had been added for the ſake of the metre only, which at firſt might have been irregular,[7] ſuch interpolations are here conſtantly retrenched, ſometimes with, and ſometimes without notice. Thoſe ſpeeches, which in the elder editions are printed as proſe, and from their own conſtruction are incapable of being compreſſed into verſe, without the aid of ſupplemental ſyllables, are reſtored to proſe again; and the meaſure is divided afreſh in others, where the maſs of words had been inharmoniouſly ſeparated into lines.

The ſcenery, throughout all the plays, is regulated in conformity to a rule, which the poet, by his general practice ſeems to have propoſed to himſelf. Several of his pieces are come down to us, divided into ſcenes as well as acts. Theſe diviſions were probably his own, as they are made on ſettled

[7] I retract this ſuppoſition, which was too haſtily formed. See note on *The Tempeſt*, Vol. IV. p. 73. STEEVENS.

principles, which would hardly have been the caſe, had the taſk been executed by the players. A change of ſcene, with Shakſpeare, moſt commonly implies a change of place, but always an entire evacuation of the ſtage. The cuſtom of diſtinguiſhing every entrance or exit by a freſh ſcene, was adopted, perhaps very idly, from the French theatre.

For the length of many notes, and the accumulation of examples in others, ſome apology may be likewiſe expected. An attempt at brevity is often found to be the ſource of an imperfect explanation. Where a paſſage has been conſtantly miſunderſtood, or where the jeſt or pleaſantry has been ſuffered to remain long in obſcurity, more inſtances have been brought to clear the one, or elucidate the other, than appear at firſt ſight to have been neceſſary. For theſe it can only be ſaid, that when they prove that phraſeology or ſource of merriment to have been once general, which at preſent ſeems particular, they are not quite impertinently intruded; as they may ſerve to free the author from a ſuſpicion of having employed an affected ſingularity of expreſſion, or indulged himſelf in alluſions to tranſient cuſtoms, which were not of ſufficient notoriety to deſerve ridicule or reprehenſion. When examples in favour of contradictory opinions are aſſembled, though no attempt is made to decide on either part, ſuch neutral collections ſhould always be regarded as materials for future criticks, who may hereafter apply them with ſucceſs. Authorities, whether in reſpect of words, or things, are not always producible from the moſt celebrated writers;[8] yet ſuch

[8] Mr. T. Warton in his excellent *Remarks on the Fairy Queen of Spenſer*, offers a ſimilar apology for having introduced illuſ-

circumſtances as fall below the notice of hiſtory, can only be ſought in the jeſt-book, the ſatire, or the play; and the novel, whoſe faſhion did not outlive a week, is ſometimes neceſſary to throw light on thoſe annals which take in the compaſs of an age. Thoſe, therefore, who would wiſh to have the peculiarities of Nym familiarized to their ideas, muſt excuſe the inſertion of ſuch an epigram as beſt

trations from obſolete literature. "I fear (ſays he) I ſhall be cenſured for quoting too many pieces of this ſort. But experience has fatally proved, that the commentator on Spenſer, Jonſon, and the reſt of our elder poets, will in vain give ſpecimens of his claſſical erudition, unleſs, at the ſame time, he brings to his work a mind intimately acquainted with thoſe books, which, though now forgotten, were yet in common uſe and high repute about the time in which his authors reſpectively wrote, and which they conſequently muſt have read. While theſe are unknown, many alluſions and many imitations will either remain obſcure, or loſe half their beauty and propriety: 'as the figures vaniſh when the canvas is decayed.'

"Pope laughs at Theobald for giving us, in his edition of Shakſpeare, a ſample of

——all ſuch READING *as was never read.*

But theſe ſtrange and ridiculous books which Theobald quoted, were unluckily the very books which SHAKSPEARE himſelf had ſtudied: the knowledge of which enabled that uſeful editor to explain ſo many different alluſions and obſolete cuſtoms in his poet, which otherwiſe could never have been underſtood. For want of this ſort of literature, Pope tells us, that the *dreadful Sagittary* in *Troilus and Creſſida*, ſignifies Teucer, ſo celebrated for his ſkill in archery. Had he deigned to conſult an old hiſtory, called *The Deſtruction of Troy*, a book which was the delight of SHAKSPEARE and of his age, he would have found that this formidable archer, was no other than an imaginary beaſt, which the Grecian army brought againſt Troy. If SHAKSPEARE is worth reading, he is worth explaining; and the reſearches uſed for ſo valuable and elegant a purpoſe, merit the thanks of genius and candour, not the ſatire of prejudice and ignorance. That labour, which ſo eſſentially contributes to the ſervice of true taſte, deſerves a more honourable repoſitory than *The Temple of Dullneſs*." STEEVENS.

ſuits the purpoſe, however tedious in itſelf; and ſuch as would be acquainted with the propriety of Falſtaff's alluſion to *ſtewed prunes*, ſhould not be diſguſted at a multitude of inſtances, which, when the point is once known to be eſtabliſhed, may be diminiſhed by any future editor. An author who *catches* (as Pope expreſſes it) at *the Cynthia of a minute*, and does not furniſh notes to his own works, is ſure to loſe half the praiſe which he might have claimed, had he dealt in alluſions leſs temporary, or cleared up for himſelf thoſe difficulties which lapſe of time muſt inevitably create.

The author of the additional notes has rather been deſirous to ſupport old readings, than to claim the merit of introducing new ones. He deſires to be regarded as one, who found the taſk he undertook more arduous than it ſeemed, while he was yet feeding his vanity with the hopes of introducing himſelf to the world as an editor in form. He, who has diſcovered in himſelf the power to rectify a few miſtakes with eaſe, is naturally led to imagine, that all difficulties muſt yield to the efforts of future labour; and perhaps feels a reluctance to be undeceived at laſt.

Mr. Steevens deſires it may be obſerved, that he has ſtrictly complied with the terms exhibited in his propoſals, having appropriated all ſuch aſſiſtances, as he received, to the uſe of the preſent editor, whoſe judgment has, in every inſtance, determined on their reſpective merits. While he enumerates his obligations to his correſpondents, it is neceſſary that one comprehenſive remark ſhould be made on ſuch communications as are omitted in this edition, though they might have proved of great advantage to a more daring commentator. The majority of theſe were founded

on the ſuppoſition, that Shakſpeare was originally an author correct in the utmoſt degree, but maimed and interpolated by the neglect or preſumption of the players. In conſequence of this belief, alterations have been propoſed wherever a verſe could be harmonized, an epithet exchanged for one more appoſite, or a ſentiment rendered leſs perplexed. Had the general current of advice been followed, the notes would have been filled with attempts at emendation apparently unneceſſary, though ſometimes elegant, and as frequently with explanations of what none would have thought difficult. A conſtant peruſer of Shakſpeare will ſuppoſe whatever is eaſy to his own apprehenſion, will prove ſo to that of others, and conſequently may paſs over ſome real perplexities in ſilence. On the contrary, if in conſideration of the different abilities of every claſs of readers, he ſhould offer a comment on all harſh inverſions of phraſe, or peculiarities of expreſſion, he will at once excite the diſguſt and diſpleaſure of ſuch as think their own knowledge or ſagacity undervalued. It is difficult to fix a medium between doing too little and too much in the taſk of mere explanation. There are yet many paſſages unexplained and unintelligible, which may be reformed, at hazard of whatever licence, for exhibitions on the ſtage, in which the pleaſure of the audience is chiefly to be conſidered; but muſt remain untouched by the critical editor, whoſe conjectures are limited by narrow bounds, and who gives only what he at leaſt ſuppoſes his author to have written.

If it is not to be expected that each vitiated paſſage in Shakſpeare can be reſtored, till a greater latitude of experiment ſhall be allowed; ſo neither can it be ſuppoſed that the force of all his alluſions

will be pointed out, till ſuch books are thoroughly examined, as cannot eaſily at preſent be collected, if at all. Several of the moſt correct liſts of our dramatick pieces exhibit the titles of plays, which are not to be met with in the completeſt collections. It is almoſt unneceſſary to mention any other than Mr. Garrick's, which, curious and extenſive as it is, derives it greateſt value from its acceſſibility.[9]

[9] There is reaſon to think that about the time of the Reformation, great numbers of plays were printed, though few of that age are now to be found; for part of Queen Elizabeth's INJUNCTIONS in 1559, are particularly directed to the ſuppreſſing of "Many pamphlets, PLAYES, and ballads: that no manner of perſon ſhall entetprize to print any ſuch, &c. but under certain reſtrictions." Vid. Sect. V. This obſervation is taken from Dr. Percy's additions to his *Eſſay on the Origin of the Engliſh Stage.* It appears likewiſe from a page at the concluſion of the ſecond volume of the entries belonging to the Stationers' Company, that in the 41ſt year of Queen Elizabeth, many new reſtraints on bookſellers were laid. Among theſe are the following: "That no playes be printed excepte they bee allowed by ſuch as have auctoritye." The records of the Stationers, however, contain the entries of ſome which have never yet been met with by the moſt ſucceſsful collectors; nor are their titles to be found in any regiſters of the ſtage, whether ancient or modern. It ſhould ſeem from the ſame volumes that it was cuſtomary for the Stationers to ſeize the whole impreſſion of any work that had given offence, and burn it publickly at their hall, in obedience to the edicts of the Archbiſhop of Canterbury, and the Biſhop of London, who ſometimes enjoyed theſe literary executions at their reſpective palaces. Among other works condemned to the flames by theſe diſcerning prelates, were the complete Satires of Biſhop Hall.*

Mr. Theobald, at the concluſion of the preface to his firſt edition of Shakſpeare, aſſerts, that excluſive of the dramas of Ben Jonſon, and Beaumont and Fletcher, he had read "above 800 of old Engliſh plays." He omitted this aſſertion, however, on

* Law, Phyſick, and Divinity, bl. l. may be found *on every ſtall.* Plays, poetry, and novels, were deſtroyed *publickly* by the Biſhops, and *privately* by the Puritans. Hence the infinite number of them entirely loſt, for which *licenſes* were procured &c. FARMER.

To the other evils of our civil war muſt be added the interruption of polite learning, and the ſuppreſſion of many dramatick and poetical names, which were plunged in obſcurity by tumults and revolutions, and have never ſince attracted curioſity. The utter neglect of ancient Engliſh literature continued ſo long, that many books may be ſuppoſed to be loſt; and that curioſity, which has been now for ſome years increaſing among us, wants materials for its operations. Books and pamphlets, printed originally in ſmall numbers,

the republication of the ſame work, and, I hope, he did ſo, through a conſciouſneſs of its utter falſhood; for if we except the plays of the authors already mentioned, it would be difficult to diſcover half the number that were written early enough to ſerve the purpoſe for which he pretends to have peruſed the imaginary ſtock of ancient literature.

I might add, that the private collection of Mr. Theobald, which, including the plays of Jonſon, Fletcher, and Shakſpeare, did not amount to many more than an hundred, remained entire in the hands of the late Mr. Tonſon, till the time of his death. It does not appear that any other collection but the Harleian was at that time formed; nor does Mr. Theobald's edition contain any intrinſick evidences of ſo comprehenſive an examination of our eldeſt dramatick writers, as he aſſumes to himſelf the merit of having made. STEEVENS.

Whatever Mr. Theobald might venture to aſſert, there is ſufficient evidence exiſting that at the time of his death he was not poſſeſſed of more than 295 quarto plays in the whole, and ſome of theſe, it is probable, were different editions of the ſame play. He died ſhortly after the 6th of September, 1744. On the 20th of October his library was advertized to be ſold by auction, by Charles Corbett, and on the third day was the following lot: "295 Old Engliſh Plays in quarto, ſome of them ſo ſcarce as not to be had at any price: to many of which are MSS. notes and remarks by Mr. Theobald, all done up neatly in boards in ſingle plays. They will all be ſold in one lot." REED.

There were about five hundred and fifty plays printed before the Reſtoration, excluſive of thoſe written by Shakſpeare, Jonſon, and Fletcher. MALONE.

being thus neglected, were ſoon deſtroyed; and though the capital authors were preſerved, they were preſerved to languiſh without regard. How little Shakſpeare himſelf was once read, may be underſtood from Tate,[1] who, in his dedication to the altered play of *King Lear*, ſpeaks of the original as of an obſcure piece, recommended to his notice by a friend; and the author of the *Tatler* having occaſion to quote a few lines out of *Macbeth*, was content to receive them from D'Avenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almoſt

[1] In the year 1707 Mr. N. Tate publiſhed a tragedy called *Injured Love, or the Cruel Husband*, and in the title-page calls himſelf "*Author* of the tragedy called *King Lear*."

In a book called *The Actor, or a Treatiſe on the Art of Playing*, 12mo. publiſhed in 1750, and imputed to Dr. Hill, is the following pretended extract from *Romeo and Juliet*, with the author's remark on it:

"The ſaints that heard our vows and know our love,
"Seeing thy faith and thy unſpotted truth,
"Will ſure take care, and let no wrongs annoy thee.
"Upon my knees I'll aſk them every day
"How my kind Juliet does; and every night,
"In the ſevere diſtreſſes of my fate,
"As I perhaps ſhall wander through the deſert,
"And want a place to reſt my weary head on,
"I'll count the ſtars, and bleſs 'em as they ſhine,
"And court them all for my dear Juliet's ſafety."

"The reader will pardon us on this and ſome other occaſions, that where we quote paſſages from plays, we give them *as the author gives them, not as the butcherly hand of a blockhead prompter may have lopped them, or as the unequal genius of ſome bungling critic may have attempted to mend them.* Whoever remembers the merit of the player's ſpeaking the things we celebrate them for, we are pretty confident will wiſh he ſpoke them *abſolutely as we give them, that is, as the author gives them.*"

Perhaps it is unneceſſary to inform the reader that not one of the lines above quoted, is to be found in the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakſpeare. They are copied from the *Caius Marius* of Otway. STEEVENS.

every original beauty is either aukwardly diſguiſed, or arbitrarily omitted. So little were the defects or peculiarities of the old writers known, even at the beginning of our century, that though the cuſtom of alliteration had prevailed to that degree in the time of Shakſpeare, that it became contemptible and ridiculous, yet it is made one of Waller's praiſes by a writer of his life, that he firſt introduced this practice into Engliſh verſification.

It will be expected that ſome notice ſhould be taken of the laſt editor of Shakſpeare, and that his merits ſhould be eſtimated with thoſe of his predeceſſors. Little, however, can be ſaid of a work, to the completion of which, both a large proportion of the commentary and various readings is as yet wanting. *The Second Part of King Henry VI.* is the only play from that edition, which has been conſulted in the courſe of this work; for as ſeveral paſſages there are arbitrarily omitted, and as no notice is given when other deviations are made from the old copies, it was of little conſequence to examine any further. This circumſtance is mentioned, leſt ſuch accidental coincidences of opinion, as may be diſcovered hereafter, ſhould be interpreted into plagiariſm.

It may occaſionally happen, that ſome of the remarks long ago produced by others, are offered again as recent diſcoveries. It is likewiſe abſolutely impoſſible to pronounce with any degree of certainty, whence all the hints, which furniſh matter for a commentary, have been collected, as they lay ſcattered in many books and papers, which were probably never read but once, or the particulars which they contain received only in the courſe of common converſation; nay, what is

called plagiariſm, is often no more than the reſult of having thought alike with others on the ſame ſubject.

The diſpute about the learning of Shakſpeare being now finally ſettled, a catalogue is added of thoſe tranſlated authors, whom Mr. Pope has thought proper to call

"The claſſicks of an age that *heard of none.*"

The reader may not be diſpleaſed to have the Greek and Roman poets, orators, &c. who had been rendered acceſſible to our author, expoſed at one view;[a] eſpecially as the liſt has received the advantage of being corrected and amplified by the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the ſubſtance of whoſe very deciſive pamphlet is interſperſed through the notes which are added in this reviſal of Dr. Johnſon's Shakſpeare.

To thoſe who have advanced the reputation of our poet, it has been endeavoured, by Dr. Johnſon, in a foregoing preface, impartially to allot their dividend of fame; and it is with great regret that we now add to the catalogue, another, the conſequence of whoſe death will perhaps affect not only the works of Shakſpeare, but of many other writers. Soon after the firſt appearance of this edition, a diſeaſe, rapid in its progreſs, deprived the world of Mr. Jacob Tonſon: a man, whoſe zeal for the improvement of Engliſh literature, and whoſe liberality to men of learning, gave him a juſt title to all the honours which men of learning can beſtow. To ſuppoſe that a perſon employed in an extenſive trade, lived in a ſtate of indifference to loſs and gain, would be to conceive

[a] See Vol. II.

a character incredible and romantick; but it may be juſtly ſaid of Mr. Tonſon, that he had enlarged his mind beyond ſolicitude about petty loſſes, and refined it from the deſire of unreaſonable profit. He was willing to admit thoſe with whom he contracted, to the juſt advantage of their own labours; and had never learned to conſider the author as an under-agent to the bookſeller. The wealth which he inherited or acquired, he enjoyed like a man conſcious of the dignity of a profeſſion ſubſervient to learning. His domeſtick life was elegant, and his charity was liberal. His manners were ſoft, and his converſation delicate: nor is, perhaps, any quality in him more to be cenſured, than that reſerve which confined his acquaintance to a ſmall number, and made his example leſs uſeful, as it was leſs extenſive. He was the laſt commercial name of a family which will be long remembered; and if Horace thought it not improper to convey the Sosii to poſterity; if rhetorick ſuffered no diſhonour from Quintilian's dedication to Trypho; let it not be thought that we diſgrace Shakſpeare, by appending to his works the name of Tonson.

To this prefatory advertiſement I have now ſubjoined [3] a chapter extracted from the *Guls Hornbook*, (a ſatirical pamphlet written by Decker in the year 1609) as it affords the reader a more complete idea of the cuſtoms peculiar to our ancient theatres, than any other publication which has hitherto fallen in my way. See this performance, page 27.

[3] This addition to Mr. Steevens's Advertiſement was made in 1778. Malone.

" CHAP. VI.

" *How a Gallant ſhould behave himſelf in a Play-houſe.*

" The *theatre* is your poet's Royal Exchange, upon which, their muſes (that are now turn'd to merchants) meeting, barter away that light commodity of words for a lighter ware than words, *plaudities* and the *breath* of the great *beaſt*, which (like the threatnings of two cowards) vaniſh all into aire. *Plaiers* and their *factors*, who put away the ſtuffe and make the beſt of it they poſſibly can (as indeed 'tis their parts ſo to doe) your gallant, your courtier, and your capten, had wont to be the ſoundeſt pay-maſters, and I thinke are ſtill the ſureſt chapmen: and theſe by meanes that their heades are well ſtockt, deale upon this comical freight by the groſſe; when your *groundling*, and *gallery commoner* buyes his ſport by the penny, and, like a *hagler*, is glad to utter it againe by retailing.

" Sithence then the place is ſo free in entertainment, allowing a ſtoole as well to the farmer's ſonne as to your Templer: that your ſtinkard has the ſelf ſame libertie to be there in his tobacco fumes, which your ſweet courtier hath: and that your carman and tinker claime as ſtrong a voice in their ſuffrage, and fit to give judgment on the plaies' life and death, as well as the proudeſt *Momus* among the tribe of *critich*; it is fit that hee, whom the moſt tailors' bils do make room for, when he comes, ſhould not be baſely (like a *vyoll*) cas'd up in a corner.

" Whether therefore the gatherers of the pub-

lique or private play-houſe ſtand to receive the afternoone's rent, let our gallant (having paid it) preſently advance himſelf up to the throne of the ſtage. I meane not in the lords' roome (which is now but the ſtage's ſuburbs). No, thoſe boxes by the iniquity of cuſtome, conſpiracy of waiting-women, and gentlemen-uſhers, that there ſweat together, and the covetous ſharers, are contemptibly thruſt into the reare, and much new ſatten is there dambd by being ſmothered to death in darkneſſe. But on the very ruſhes where the comedy is to daunce, yea and under the ſtate of *Cambiſes* himſelfe muſt our feather'd eſtridge, like a piece of ordnance be planted valiantly (becauſe impudently) beating downe the mewes and hiſſes of the oppoſed raſcality.

" For do but caſt up a reckoning, what large cummings in are purs'd up by ſitting on the ſtage. Firſt a conſpicuous eminence is gotten, by which meanes the beſt and moſt eſſential parts of a gallant (good cloathes, a proportionable legge, white hand, the Perſian locke, and a tollerable beard,) are perfectly revealed.

" By ſitting on the ſtage you have a ſign'd pattent to engroſſe the whole commodity of cenſure; may lawfully preſume to be a girder; and ſtand at the helme to ſteere the paſſage of ſcænes, yet no man ſhall once offer to hinder you from obtaining the title of an inſolent over-weening coxcombe.

" By ſitting on the ſtage, you may (without trauelling for it) at the very next doore, aſke whoſe play it is: and by that queſt of inquiry, the law warrants you to avoid much miſtaking: if you know not the author, you may raile againſt him; and peradventure ſo behave yourſelfe, that you may enforce the author to know you.

" By ſitting on the ſtage, if you be a knight, you may happily get you a miſtreſſe: if a mere *Fleet-ſtreet* gentleman, a wife: but aſſiure yourſelfe by continuall reſidence, you are the firſt and principall man in election to begin the number of *We three.*

" By ſpreading your body on the ſtage, and by being a juſtice in examining of plaies, you ſhall put yourſelfe into ſuch a true ſcænical authority, that ſome poet ſhall not dare to preſent his muſe rudely before your eyes, without having firſt unmaſkt her, rifled her, and diſcovered all her bare and moſt myſtical parts before you at a taverne, when you moſt knightly, ſhal for his paines, pay for both their ſuppers.

" By ſitting on the ſtage, you may (with ſmall coſt) purchaſe the deere acquaintance of the boyes: have a good ſtoole for ſixpence: at any time know what particular part any of the infants preſent: get your match lighted, examine the play-ſuits' lace, perhaps win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c. And to conclude, whether you be a ſoole or a juſtice of peace, a cuckold or a capten, a lord maior's ſonne or a dawcocke, a knave or an under ſhriefe, of what ſtamp ſoever you be, currant or counterfet, the ſtagelike time will bring you to moſt perfect light, and lay you open: neither are you to be hunted from thence though the ſcarcrowes in the yard hoot you, hiſſe at you, ſpit at you, yea throw dirt even in your teeth: 'tis moſt gentleman-like patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the ſilly animals. But if the rabble, with a full throat, crie away with the ſoole, you were worſe than a mad-man to tarry by it: for the gentleman and the ſoole ſhould never ſit on the ſtage together.

" Mary, let this obſervation go hand in hand with the reſt: or rather, like a country-ſerving man, ſome five yards before them. Preſent not your ſelfe on the ſtage (eſpecially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor into his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hees upon point to enter: for then it is time, as though you were one of the *properties*, or that you dropt of the *hangings*, to creep behind the arras, with your *tripos* or three-legged ſtoole in one hand, and a teſton mounted betweene a fore-finger and a thumbe, in the other: for if you ſhould beſtow your perſon upon the vulgar, when the belly of the houſe is but halfe full, your apparell is quite eaten up, the faſhion loſt, and the proportion of your body in more danger to be devoured, then if it were ſerved up in the Counter amongſt the Poultry: avoid that as you would the baſtome. It ſhall crowne you with rich commendation, to laugh alowd in the middeſt of the moſt ſerious and ſaddeſt ſcene of the terribleſt tragedy: and to let that clapper (your tongue) be toſt ſo high that all the houſe may ring of it: your lords uſe it; your knights are apes to the lords, and do ſo too: your inne-a-court-man is zany to the knights, and (many very ſcurvily) comes likewiſe limping after it: bee thou a beagle to them all, and never lin ſnuffing till you have ſcented them: for by talking and laughing (like a ploughman in a morris) you heape *Pelion* upon *Oſſa*, glory upon glory: as firſt all the eyes in the galleries will leave walking after the players, and onely follow you! the ſimpleſt dolt in the houſe ſnatches up your name, and when he meetes you in the ſtreetes, or that you fall into his hands in the middle of a watch, his word ſhall be taken for

you: heele cry, *Hees ſuch a gallant,* and you paſſe. Secondly you publiſh your temperance to the world, in that you ſeeme not to reſort thither to taſte vaine pleaſures with a hungrie appetite; but onely as a gentleman, to ſpend a fooliſh houre or two, becauſe you can doe nothing elſe. Thirdly you mightily diſreliſh the audience, and diſgrace the authour: marry, you take up (though it be at the worſt hand) a ſtrong opinion of your owne judgement, and inforce the poet to take pity of your weakeneſſe, and by ſome dedicated ſonnet to bring you into a better paradice, onely to ſtop your mouth.

" If you can (either for love or money) provide your ſelfe a lodging by the water ſide: for above the conveniencie it brings to ſhun ſhoulder-clapping, and to ſhip away your cockatrice betimes in the morning, it addes a kind of ſtate unto you, to be carried from thence to the ſtaires of your playhouſe: hate a ſculler (remember that) worſe then to be acquainted with one ath' ſcullery. No, your oares are your onely ſea-crabs, boord them, and take heed you never go twice together with one paire: often ſhifting is a great credit to gentlemen: and that dividing of your fare wil make the poore waterſnaks be ready to pul you in peeces to enjoy your cuſtome. No matter whether upon landing you have money or no; you may ſwim in twentie of their boates over the river upon *tichet*; mary, when ſilver comes in, remember to pay trebble their fare, and it will make your flounder-catchers to ſend more thankes after you, when you doe not draw, then when you doe: for they know, it will be their owne another daie.

" Before the play begins, fall to cardes; you may win or looſe (as fencers doe in a prize) and beate

one another by confederacie, yet ſhare the money when you meete at ſupper: notwithſtanding, to gul the raggamuffins that ſtand a loofe gaping at you, throw the cards (having firſt torne four or five of them) round about the ſtage, juſt upon the third ſound, as though you had loſt: it ſkils not if the four knaves ly on their backs, and outface the audience, there's none ſuch fooles as dare take exceptions at them, becauſe ere the play go off, better knaves than they, will fall into the company.

"Now, Sir, if the writer be a fellow that hath either epigram'd you, or hath had a flirt at your miſtris, or hath brought either your feather, or your red beard, or your little legs, &c. on the ſtage, you ſhall diſgrace him worſe then by toſſing him in a blanket, or giving him the baſtinado in a taverne, if in the middle of his play (bee it paſtorall or comedy, morall or tragedie) you riſe with a ſkreud and diſcontented face from your ſtoole to be gone: no matter whether the ſcenes be good or no; the better they are, the worſe doe you diſtaſt them: and beeing on your feete, ſneake not away like a coward, but ſalute all your gentle acquaintance that are ſpred either on the ruſhes or on ſtooles about you, and draw what troope you can from the ſtage after you: the *mimicks* are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow roome: their poet cries perhaps, a pox go with you, but care not you for that; there's no muſick without frets.

"Mary, if either the company, or indiſpoſition of the weather binde you to ſit it out, my counſell is then that you turne plaine ape: take up a ruſh and tickle the earneſt eares of your fellow gallants, to make other fooles fall a laughing: mewe at the paſſionate ſpeeches, blare at merrie, finde fault with

the muſicke, whewe at the children's action, whiſtle at the ſongs; and above all, curſe the ſharers, that whereas the ſame day you had beſtowed forty ſhillings on an embroidered felt and feather (Scotch faſhion) for your miſtres in the court, or your punck in the cittie, within two houres after, you encounter with the very ſame block on the ſtage, when the haberdaſher ſwore to you the impreſſion was extant but that morning.

"To conclude, hoord up the fineſt play-ſcraps you can get, upon which your leane wit may moſt ſavourly feede, for want of other ſtuffe, when the *Arcadian* and *Euphuis'd* gentlewomen have their tongues ſharpened to ſet upon you: that qualitie (next to your ſhittlecocke) is the only furniture to a courtier that's but a new beginner, and is but in his A B C of complement. The next places that are fil'd after the play-houſes bee emptied, are (or ought to be) tavernes: into a taverne then let us next march, where the braines of one hogſhead muſt be beaten out to make up another."[4]

[4] The following *pretty picture* of THE STAGE is given in Gayton's Notes on *Don Quixote*, 1654, p. 271:

"Men come not to ſtudy at a play-houſe, but love ſuch expreſſions and paſſages, which with eaſe inſinuate themſelves into their capacities. *Lingua*, that learned comedy of the contention betwixt the five ſenſes for ſuperiority, is not to be proſtituted to the common ſtage, but is only proper for an *Academy*; to them bring *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, Green's *Tu Quoque*, the *Devil of Edmonton*, and the like; or, if it be on holy dayes, when taylers, water-men, ſhoo-makers, butchers, and apprentices, are at leiſure, then it is good policy to amaze thoſe *violent* ſpirits with ſome tearing Tragedy full of fights and ſkirmiſhes: as the *Guelphs* and *Guiblins*, *Greeks* and *Trojans*, or the three *London Apprentices*; which commonly ends in ſix acts, the ſpectators frequently mounting the ſtage, and making a more bloody cataſtrophe amongſt themſelves, than the players did. I have known upon one of thoſe *feſtivals*, but eſpecially at *Shrove-tide*, where

I ſhould have attempted on the preſent occaſion to enumerate all other pamphlets, &c. from whence particulars relative to the conduct of our early theatres might be collected, but that Dr. Percy, in his firſt volume of the *Reliques of Ancient Engliſh Poetry*, (third edit. p. 128, &c.) has extracted ſuch paſſages from them as tend to the illuſtration of this ſubject; to which he has added more accurate remarks than my experience in theſe matters would have enabled me to ſupply. STEEVENS.

the players have been appointed, notwithſtanding their bils to the contrary, to act what the major part of the company had a mind to; ſometimes *Tamerlane*, ſometimes *Jugurth*, ſometimes *The Jew of Malta*; and ſometimes parts of all theſe, and at laſt none of the three taking, they were forc'd to undreſſe and put off their tragick habits, and conclude the day with *the Merry Milk-maides*. And unleſſe this were done, and the popular humour ſatisfied, as ſometimes it ſo fortun'd, that the players were refractory; the benches, the tiles, the laths, the ſtones, oranges, apples, nuts, flew about moſt liberally; and, as there were mechanicks of all profeſſions, who fell every one to his owne trade, and diſſolved a houſe in an inſtant, and made a ruine of a ſtately fabrick. It was not then the moſt mimicall nor fighting man, *Fowler*, nor *Andrew Cane*, could pacifie: Prologues nor Epilogues would prevaile; the devill and the fool were quite out of favour. Nothing but noiſe and tumult fils the houſe, untill a cogg take 'um, and then to the bawdy houſes and reforme them; and inſtantly to the *Bank's Side*, where the poor bears muſt conclude the riot, and fight twenty dogs at a time beſide the butchers, which ſometimes fell into the ſervice; this perform'd, and *the horſe* and *jack-an-apes* for a jigge, they had ſport enough that day for nothing." TODD.

PREFACE

TO

MR. M. MASON'S COMMENTS, &c.

1785.

NOT thoroughly ſatisfied with any of the former editions of Shakſpeare, even that of Johnſon, I had reſolved to venture upon one of my own, and had actually collected materials for the purpoſe, when that,[5] which is the ſubject of the following Obſervations, made its appearance; in which I found that a conſiderable part of the amendments and explanations I had intended to propoſe were anticipated by the labours and eccentrick reading of Steevens, the ingenious reſearches of Malone, and the ſagacity of Tyrwhitt.—I will fairly confeſs that I was ſomewhat mortified at this diſcovery, which compell'd me to relinquiſh a favourite purſuit, from whence I had vainly expected to derive ſome degree of credit in the literary world. This, however, was a ſecondary conſideration; and my principal purpoſe will be anſwered to my wiſh, if the Comments, which I now ſubmit to the publick ſhall, in any other hands, contribute materially to a more complete edition of our inimitable poet.

If we may judge from the advertiſement prefixed

[5] Edit. 1778.

to his Supplement, Malone ſeems to think that no other edition can hereafter be wanted; as in ſpeaking of the laſt, he ſays, "The text of the author ſeems now to be finally ſettled, the great abilities and unwearied reſearches of the editor having left little obſcure or unexplained."[6]

Though I cannot ſubſcribe to this opinion of Malone, with reſpect to the final adjuſtment of the text, I ſhall willingly join in his encomium on the editor, who deſerves the applauſe and gratitude of the publick, not only for his induſtry and abilities, but alſo for the zeal with which he has proſecuted the object he had in view, which prompted him, not only to the weariſome taſk of collation, but alſo to engage in a peculiar courſe of reading, neither pleaſing nor profitable for any other purpoſe.

But I will venture to aſſert, that his merit is more conſpicuous in the comments than the text; in the regulation of which he ſeems to have acted rather from caprice, than any ſettled principle; admitting alterations, in ſome paſſages, on very inſufficient authority, indeed, whilſt in others he has retained the antient readings, though evidently corrupt, in preference to amendments as evidently juſt; and it frequently happens, that after pointing out to us the true reading, he adheres to that which he himſelf has proved to be falſe. Had he regulated the text in every place according to his own judgment, Malone's obſervation would have been nearer to the truth; but as it now ſtands, the

[6] As I was never vain enough to ſuppoſe the edit. 1778 was entitled to this encomium, I can find no difficulty in allowing that it has been properly recalled by the gentleman who beſtowed it. See his Preface; and his *Letter to the Reverend Dr. Farmer*, p. 7 and 8. STEEVENS.

laſt edition has no ſignal advantage, that I can perceive, over that of Johnſon, in point of correctneſs.

But the object that Steevens had moſt at heart, was the illuſtration of Shakſpeare, in which it muſt be owned he has clearly ſurpaſſed all the former editors. If without his abilities, application, or reading, I have happened to ſucceed in explaining ſome paſſages, which he miſapprehended, or in ſuggeſting amendments that eſcaped his ſagacity, it is owing merely to the minute attention with which I have ſtudied every line of theſe plays, whilſt the other commentators, I will not except even Steevens himſelf, have too generally confined their obſervation and ingenuity to thoſe litigated paſſages, which have been handed down to them by former editors, as requiring either amendment or explanation, and have ſuffered many others to paſs unheeded, that in truth, were equally erroneous or obſcure. It may poſſibly be thought that I have gone too far in the other extreme, in pointing out trifling miſtakes in the printing, which every reader perceives to be ſuch, and amends as he reads; but where correctneſs is the object, no inaccuracy, however immaterial, ſhould eſcape unnoticed.——

——There is perhaps no ſpecies of publication whatever, more likely to produce diverſity of opinion than verbal criticiſms; for as there is no certain criterion of truth, no eſtabliſhed principle by which we can decide whether they be juſtly founded or not, every reader is left to his own imagination, on which will depend his cenſure or applauſe. I have not therefore the vanity to hope that all theſe obſervations will be generally approved of; ſome of them, I confeſs, are not thoroughly ſatisfactory even to myſelf, and are ha-

zarded, rather than relied on:—But there are others which I offer with ſome degree of confidence, and I flatter myſelf that they will meet, upon the whole, with a favourable reception from the admirers of Shakſpeare, as tending to elucidate a number of paſſages which have hitherto been misprinted or miſunderſtood.

In forming theſe comments, I have confined myſelf ſolely to the particular edition which is the object of them, without comparing it with any other, even with that of Johnſon: not doubting but the editors had faithfully ſtated the various readings of the firſt editions, I reſolved to avoid the labour of collating; but had I been inclined to undertake that taſk, it would not have been in my power, as few, if any, of the ancient copies can be had in the country where I reſide.

I have ſelected from the Supplement, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, becauſe it is ſuppoſed by ſome of the commentators to have been the work of Shakſpeare, and is at leaſt as faulty as any of the reſt. The remainder of the plays which Malone has publiſhed are neither, in my opinion, the production of our poet, or ſufficiently incorrect to require any comment. M. Mason.

MR. REED'S

ADVERTISEMENT,

BEFORE THE THIRD EDITION, 1785.

THE works of Shakſpeare, during the laſt twenty years, have been the objects of publick attention more than at any former period. In that time the various editions of his performances have been examined, his obſcurities illuminated, his defects pointed out, and his beauties diſplayed, ſo fully, ſo accurately, and in ſo ſatisfactory a manner, that it might reaſonably be preſumed little would remain to be done by either new editors or new commentators: yet, though the diligence and ſagacity of thoſe gentlemen who contributed towards the laſt edition of this author may ſeem to have almoſt exhauſted the ſubject, the ſame train of enquiry has brought to light new diſcoveries, and accident will probably continue to produce further illuſtrations, which may render ſome alterations neceſſary in every ſucceeding republication.

Since the laſt edition of this work in 1778, the zeal for elucidating Shakſpeare, which appeared in moſt of the gentlemen whoſe names are affixed to the notes, has ſuffered little abatement. The ſame perſevering ſpirit of enquiry has continued to exert itſelf, and the ſame laborious ſearch into the literature, the manners, and the cuſtoms of the times, which was formerly ſo ſucceſsfully employed, has

remained undiminiſhed. By theſe aids ſome new information has been obtained, and ſome new materials collected. From the aſſiſtance of ſuch writers, even Shakſpeare will receive no diſcredit.

When the very great and various talents of the laſt editor, particularly for this work, are conſidered, it will occaſion much regret to find, that having ſuperintended two editions of his favourite author through the preſs, he has at length declined the laborious office, and committed the care of the preſent edition to one who laments with the reſt of the world the receſſion of his predeceſſor; being conſcious, as well of his own inferiority, as of the injury the publication will ſuſtain by the change.

As ſome alterations have been made in the preſent edition, it may be thought neceſſary to point them out. Theſe are of two kinds, additions and omiſſions. The additions are ſuch as have been ſupplied by the laſt editor, and the principal of the living commentators. To mention theſe aſſiſtances, is ſufficient to excite expectation; but to ſpeak any thing in their praiſe will be ſuperfluous to thoſe who are acquainted with their former labours. Some remarks are alſo added from new commentators, and ſome notices extracted from books which have been publiſhed in the courſe of a few years paſt.

Of the omiſſions, the moſt important are ſome notes which have been demonſtrated to be ill founded, and ſome which were ſuppoſed to add to the ſize of the volumes without increaſing their value. It may probably have happened that a few are rejected which ought to have been retained; and in that caſe the preſent editor, who has been the occaſion of their removal, will feel ſome con-

cern from the injuſtice of his proceeding. He is, however, inclined to believe, that what he has omitted will be pardoned by the reader; and that the liberty which he has taken will not be thought to have been licentiouſly indulged. At all events, that the cenſure may fall where it ought, he deſires it to be underſtood that no perſon is anſwerable for any of theſe innovations but himſelf.

It has been obſerved by the laſt editor, that the multitude of inſtances which have been produced to exemplify particular words, and explain obſolete cuſtoms, may, when the point is once known to be eſtabliſhed, be diminiſhed by any future editor, and, in conformity to this opinion, ſeveral quotations, which were heretofore properly introduced, are now curtailed. Were an apology required on this occaſion, the preſent editor might ſhelter himſelf under the authority of Prior, who long ago has ſaid,

> "That when one's proofs are aptly choſen,
> "Four are as valid as four dozen."

The preſent editor thinks it unneceſſary to ſay any thing of his own ſhare in the work, except that he undertook it in conſequence of an application which was too flattering and too honourable to him to decline. He mentions this only to have it known that he did not intrude himſelf into the ſituation. He is not inſenſible, that the taſk would have been better executed by many other gentlemen, and particularly by ſome whoſe names appear to the notes. He has added but little to the bulk of the volumes from his own obſervations, having, upon every occaſion, rather choſen to avoid a note, than to court the opportunity of inſerting one. The liberty he has taken of omitting ſome remarks,

he is confident, has been exerciſed without prejudice and without partiality; and therefore, truſting to the candour and indulgence of the publick, will forbear to detain them any longer from the entertainment they may receive from the greateſt poet of this or any other nation. REED.

Nov. 10, 1785.

MR. MALONE'S

PREFACE.

IN the following work, the labour of eight years, I have endeavoured, with unceaſing ſolicitude, to give a faithful and correct edition of the plays and poems of Shakſpeare. Whatever imperfection or errors therefore may be found in it, (and what work of ſo great a length and difficulty was ever free from error or imperfection?) will, I truſt, be imputed to any other cauſe than want of zeal for the due execution of the taſk which I ventured to undertake.

The difficulties to be encountered by an editor of the works of Shakſpeare, have been ſo frequently ſtated, and are ſo generally acknowledged, that it may ſeem unneceſſary to conciliate the publick

favour by this plea: but as theſe in my opinion have in ſome particulars been over-rated, and in others not ſufficiently inſiſted on, and as the true ſtate of the ancient copies of this poet's writings has never been laid before the publick, I ſhall conſider the ſubject as if it had not been already diſcuſſed by preceding editors.

In the year 1756 Dr. Johnſon publiſhed the following excellent ſcheme of a new edition of Shakſpeare's dramatick pieces, which he completed in 1765:

"When the works of Shakſpeare are, after ſo many editions, again offered to the publick, it will doubtleſs be enquired, why Shakſpeare ſtands in more need of critical aſſiſtance than any other of the Engliſh writers, and what are the deficiencies of the late attempts, which another editor may hope to ſupply.

"The buſineſs of him that republiſhes an ancient book is, to correct what is corrupt, and to explain what is obſcure. To have a text corrupt in many places, and in many doubtful, is, among the authors that have written ſince the uſe of types, almoſt peculiar to Shakſpeare. Moſt writers, by publiſhing their own works, prevent all various readings, and preclude all conjectural criticiſm. Books indeed are ſometimes publiſhed after the death of him who produced them, but they are better ſecured from corruptions than theſe unfortunate compoſitions. They ſubſiſt in a ſingle copy, written or reviſed by the author; and the faults of the printed volume can be only faults of one deſcent.

"But of the works of Shakſpeare the condition has been far different: he ſold them, not to be printed, but to be played. They were immediately

copied for the actors, and multiplied by tranſcript after tranſcript, vitiated by the blunders of the penman, or changed by the affectation of the player; perhaps enlarged to introduce a jeſt, or mutilated to ſhorten the repreſentation; and printed at laſt without the concurrence of the author, without the conſent of the proprietor, from compilations made by chance or by ſtealth out of the ſeparate parts written for the theatre: and thus thruſt into the world ſurreptitiouſly and haſtily, they ſuffered another depravation from the ignorance and negligence of the printers, as every man who knows the ſtate of the preſs in that age will readily conceive.

"It is not eaſy for invention to bring together ſo many cauſes concurring to vitiate a text. No other author ever gave up his works to fortune and time with ſo little care; no books could be left in hands ſo likely to injure them, as plays frequently acted, yet continued in manuſcript: no other tranſcribers were likely to be ſo little qualified for their taſk, as thoſe who copied for the ſtage, at a time when the lower ranks of the people were univerſally illiterate: no other editions were made from fragments ſo minutely broken, and ſo fortuitouſly re-united; and in no other age was the art of printing in ſuch unſkilful hands.

"With the cauſes of corruption that make the reviſal of Shakſpeare's dramatick pieces neceſſary, may be enumerated the cauſes of obſcurity, which may be partly imputed to his age, and partly to himſelf.

"When a writer outlives his contemporaries, and remains almoſt the only unforgotten name of a diſtant time, he is neceſſarily obſcure. Every age has its modes of ſpeech, and its caſt of thought;

which, though eaſily explained when there are many books to be compared with each other, become ſometimes unintelligible, and always difficult, when there are no parallel paſſages that may conduce to their illuſtration. Shakſpeare is the firſt conſiderable author of ſublime or familiar dialogue in our language. Of the books which he read, and from which he formed his ſtyle, ſome perhaps have periſhed, and the reſt are neglected. His imitations are therefore unnoted, his alluſions are undiſcovered, and many beauties, both of pleaſantry and greatneſs, are loſt with the objects to which they were united, as the figures vaniſh when the canvas has decayed.

"It is the great excellence of Shakſpeare, that he drew his ſcenes from nature, and from life. He copied the manners of the world then paſſing before him, and has more alluſions than other poets to the traditions and ſuperſtitions of the vulgar; which muſt therefore be traced before he can be underſtood.

"He wrote at a time when our poetical language was yet unformed, when the meaning of our phraſes was yet in fluctuation, when words were adopted at pleaſure from the neighbouring languages, and while the Saxon was ſtill viſibly mingled in our diction. The reader is therefore embarraſſed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obſoleteneſs and innovation. In that age, as in all others, faſhion produced phraſeology, which ſucceeding faſhion ſwept away before its meaning was generally known, or ſufficiently authorized: and in that age, above all others, experiments were made upon our language, which diſtorted its combinations, and diſturbed its uniformity.

"If Shakſpeare has difficulties above other

writers, it is to be imputed to the nature of his work, which required the uſe of the common colloquial language, and conſequently admitted many phraſes alluſive, elliptical, and proverbial, ſuch as we ſpeak and hear every hour without obſerving them; and of which, being now familiar, we do not ſuſpect that they can ever grow uncouth, or that, being now obvious, they can ever ſeem remote.

"Theſe are the principal cauſes of the obſcurity of Shakſpeare; to which may be added that fullneſs of idea, which might ſometimes load his words with more ſentiment than they could conveniently convey, and that rapidity of imagination which might hurry him to a ſecond thought before he had fully explained the firſt. But my opinion is, that very few of his lines were difficult to his audience, and that he uſed ſuch expreſſions as were then common, though the paucity of contemporary writers makes them now ſeem peculiar.

"Authors are often praiſed for improvement, or blamed for innovation, with very little juſtice, by thoſe who read few other books of the ſame age. Addiſon himſelf has been ſo unſucceſsful in enumerating the words with which Milton has enriched our language, as perhaps not to have named one of which Milton was the author: and Bentley has yet more unhappily praiſed him as the introducer of thoſe eliſions into Engliſh poetry, which had been uſed from the firſt eſſays of verſification among us, and which Milton was indeed the laſt that practiſed.

"Another impediment, not the leaſt vexatious to the commentator, is the exactneſs with which Shakſpeare followed his author. Inſtead of dilating his thoughts into generalities, and expreſſing

incidents with poetical latitude, he often combines circumſtances unneceſſary to his main deſign, only becauſe he happened to find them together. Such paſſages can be illuſtrated only by him who has read the ſame ſtory in the very book which Shakſpeare conſulted.

" He that undertakes an edition of Shakſpeare, has all theſe difficulties to encounter, and all theſe obſtructions to remove.

" The corruptions of the text will be corrected by a careful collation of the oldeſt copies, by which it is hoped that many reſtorations may yet be made; at leaſt it will be neceſſary to collect and note the variations as materials for future criticks, for it very often happens that a wrong reading has affinity to the right.

" In this part all the preſent editions are apparently and intentionally defective. The criticks did not ſo much as wiſh to facilitate the labour of thoſe that followed them. The ſame books are ſtill to be compared; the work that has been done, is to be done again, and no ſingle edition will ſupply the reader with a text on which he can rely as the beſt copy of the works of Shakſpeare.

" The edition now propoſed will at leaſt have this advantage over others. It will exhibit all the obſervable varieties of all the copies that can be found; that, if the reader is not ſatisfied with the editor's determination, he may have the means of chooſing better for himſelf.

" Where all the books are evidently vitiated, and collation can give no aſſiſtance, then begins the taſk of critical ſagacity: and ſome changes may well be admitted in a text never ſettled by the author, and ſo long expoſed to caprice and ignorance. But nothing ſhall be impoſed, as in the

Oxford edition, without notice of the alteration; nor ſhall conjecture be wantonly or unneceſſarily indulged.'

" It has been long found, that very ſpecious emendations do not equally ſtrike all minds with conviction, nor even the ſame mind at different times; and, therefore, though perhaps many alterations may be propoſed as eligible, very few will be obtruded as certain. In a language ſo ungrammatical as the Engliſh, and ſo licentious as that of Shakſpeare, emendatory criticiſm is always hazardous; nor can it be allowed to any man who is not particularly verſed in the writings of that age, and particularly ſtudious of his author's diction. There is danger leſt peculiarities ſhould be miſtaken for corruptions, and paſſages rejected as unintelligible, which a narrow mind happens not to underſtand.

" All the former criticks have been ſo much employed on the correction of the text, that they have not ſufficiently attended to the elucidation of paſſages obſcured by accident or time. The editor will endeavour to read the books which the author read, to trace his knowledge to its ſource, and compare his copies with the originals. If in this part of his deſign he hopes to attain any degree of ſuperiority to his predeceſſors, it muſt be conſidered, that he has the advantage of their labours; that part of the work being already done, more care is naturally beſtowed on the other part; and that, to declare the truth, Mr. Rowe and Mr. Pope were very ignorant of the ancient Engliſh literature; Dr. Warburton was detained by more important ſtudies; and Mr. Theobald, if fame be juſt to his memory, conſidered learning only as an inſtrument of gain, and made no further inquiry after his author's meaning, when once he had notes

ſufficient to embelliſh his page with the expected decorations.

" With regard to obſolete or peculiar diction, the editor may perhaps claim ſome degree of confidence, having had more motives to conſider the whole extent of our language than any other man from its firſt formation. He hopes, that, by comparing the works of Shakſpeare with thoſe of writers who lived at the ſame time, immediately preceded, or immediately followed him, he ſhall be able to aſcertain his ambiguities, diſentangle his intricacies, and recover the meaning of words now loſt in the darkneſs of antiquity.

" When therefore any obſcurity ariſes from an alluſion to ſome other book, the paſſage will be quoted. When the diction is entangled, it will be cleared by a paraphraſe or interpretation. When the ſenſe is broken by the ſuppreſſion of part of the ſentiment in pleaſantry or paſſion, the connection will be ſupplied. When any forgotten cuſtom is hinted, care will be taken to retrieve and explain it. The meaning aſſigned to doubtful words will be ſupported by the authorities of other writers, or by parallel paſſages of Shakſpeare himſelf.

" The obſervation of faults and beauties is one of the duties of an annotator, which ſome of Shakſpeare's editors have attempted, and ſome have neglected. For this part of his taſk, and for this only, was Mr. Pope eminently and indiſputably qualified: nor has Dr. Warburton followed him with leſs diligence or leſs ſucceſs. But I never obſerved that mankind was much delighted or improved by their aſteriſks, commas, or double commas; of which the only effect is, that they preclude the pleaſure of judging for ourſelves;

teach the young and ignorant to decide without principles; defeat curioſity and diſcernment by leaving them leſs to diſcover; and, at laſt, ſhow the opinion of the critick, without the reaſons on which it was founded, and without affording any light by which it may be examined.

"The editor, though he may leſs delight his own vanity, will probably pleaſe his reader more, by ſuppoſing him equally able with himſelf to judge of beauties and faults, which require no previous acquiſition of remote knowledge. A deſcription of the obvious ſcenes of nature, a repreſentation of general life, a ſentiment of reflection or experience, a deduction of concluſive argument, a forcible eruption of effervescent paſſion, are to be conſidered as proportionate to common apprehenſion, unaſſiſted by critical officiouſneſs; ſince to conceive them, nothing more is requiſite than acquaintance with the general ſtate of the world, and thoſe faculties which he muſt always bring with him who would read Shakſpeare.

"But when the beauty ariſes from ſome adaptation of the ſentiment to cuſtoms worn out of uſe, to opinions not univerſally prevalent, or to any accidental or minute particularity, which cannot be ſupplied by common underſtanding, or common obſervation, it is the duty of a commentator to lend his aſſiſtance.

"The notice of beauties and faults thus limited will make no diſtinct part of the deſign, being reducible to the explanation of obſcure paſſages.

"The editor does not however intend to preclude himſelf from the compariſon of Shakſpeare's ſentiments or expreſſion with thoſe of ancient or modern authors, or from the diſplay of any beauty not obvious to the ſtudents of poetry; for as he

hopes to leave his author better underſtood, he wiſhes likewiſe to procure him more rational approbation.

"The former editors have affected to ſlight their predeceſſors: but in this edition all that is valuable will be adopted from every commentator, that poſterity may conſider it as including all the reſt, and exhibit whatever is hitherto known of the great father of the Engliſh drama."

Though Dr. Johnſon has here pointed out with his uſual perſpicuity and vigour, the true courſe to be taken by an editor of Shakſpeare, ſome of the poſitions which he has laid down may be controverted, and ſome are indubitably not true. It is not true that the plays of this author were more incorrectly printed than thoſe of any of his contemporaries: for in the plays of Marlowe, Marſton, Fletcher, Maſſinger, and others, as many errors may be found. It is not true that the art of printing was in no other age in ſo unſkilful hands. Nor is it true, in the latitude in which it is ſtated, that "theſe plays were printed from compilations made by chance or by ſtealth out of the ſeparate parts written for the theatre:" two only of all his dramas, *The Merry Wives of Windſor* and *King Henry V.* appear to have been thus thruſt into the world, and of the former it is yet a doubt whether it is a firſt ſketch or an imperfect copy. I do not believe that words were then adopted at pleaſure from the neighbouring languages, or that an antiquated diction was then employed by any poet but Spenſer. That the obſcurities of our author, to whatever cauſe they may be referred, do not ariſe from the paucity of contemporary writers, the preſent edition may furniſh indiſputable evidence.

And laſtly; if it be true, that "very few of Shakſpeare's lines were difficult to his audience, and that he uſed ſuch expreſſions as were then common," (a poſition of which I have not the ſmalleſt doubt,) it cannot be true, that "his reader is embarraſſed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obſoleteneſs and innovation."

When Mr. Pope firſt undertook the taſk of reviſing theſe plays, every anomaly of language, and every expreſſion that was not underſtood at that time, were conſidered as errors or corruptions, and the text was altered, or amended, as it was called, at pleaſure. The principal writers of the early part of this century ſeem never to have looked behind them, and to have conſidered their own era and their own phraſeology as the ſtandard of perfection: hence, from the time of Pope's edition, for above twenty years, to alter Shakſpeare's text and to reſtore it, were conſidered as ſynonymous terms. During the laſt thirty years our principal employment has been to *reſtore*, in the true ſenſe of the word; to eject the arbitrary and capricious innovations made by our predeceſſors from ignorance of the phraſeology and cuſtoms of the age in which Shakſpeare lived.

As on the one hand our poet's text has been deſcribed as more corrupt than it really is, ſo on the other, the labour required to inveſtigate fugitive alluſions, to explain and juſtify obſolete phraſeology by parallel paſſages from contemporary authors, and to form a genuine text by a faithful collation of the original copies, has not perhaps had that notice to which it is entitled; for undoubtedly it is a laborious and a difficult taſk: and the due execution of this it is, which can alone

entitle an editor of Shakſpeare to the favour of the publick.

I have ſaid that the comparative value of the various ancient copies of Shakſpeare's plays has never been preciſely aſcertained. To prove this, it will be neceſſary to go into a long and minute diſcuſſion, for which, however, no apology is neceſſary: for though to explain and illuſtrate the writings of our poet is a principal duty of his editor, to aſcertain his genuine text, to fix what is to be explained, is his firſt and immediate object: and till it be eſtabliſhed which of the ancient copies is entitled to preference, we have no criterion by which the text can be aſcertained.

Fifteen of Shakſpeare's plays were printed in quarto antecedent to the firſt complete collection of his works, which was publiſhed by his fellow-comedians in 1623. Theſe plays are, *A Midſummer-Night's Dream, Love's Labour's Loſt, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, The Two Parts of King Henry IV. King Richard II. King Richard III. The Merchant of Venice, King Henry V. Much Ado about Nothing, The Merry Wives of Windſor, Troilus and Creſsida, King Lear,* and *Othello.*

The players, when they mention theſe copies, repreſent them all as mutilated and imperfect; but this was merely thrown out to give an additional value to their own edition, and is not ſtrictly true of any but two of the whole number; *The Merry Wives of Windſor,* and *King Henry V.*—With reſpect to the other thirteen copies, though undoubtedly they were all ſurreptitious, that is, ſtolen from the playhouſe, and printed without the conſent of the author or the proprietors, they *in general* are preferable to the exhibition of the ſame plays in the

folio; for this plain reaſon, becauſe, inſtead of printing theſe plays from a manuſcript, the editors of the folio, to ſave labour, or from ſome other motive, printed the greater part of them from the very copies which they repreſented as maimed and imperfect, and frequently from a late, inſtead of the earlieſt, edition; in ſome inſtances with additions and alterations of their own. Thus therefore the firſt folio, as far as reſpects the plays above enumerated, labours under the diſadvantage of being at leaſt a ſecond, and in ſome caſes a third, edition of theſe quartos. I do not, however, mean to ſay, that many valuable corrections of paſſages undoubtedly corrupt in the quartos are not found in the folio copy; or that a ſingle line of theſe plays ſhould be printed by a careful editor without a minute examination, and collation of both copies; but thoſe quartos were in general the baſis on which the folio editors built, and are entitled to our particular attention and examination as *firſt* editions.

It is well known to thoſe who are converſant with the buſineſs of the preſs, that, (unleſs when the author corrects and reviſes his own works,) as editions of books are multiplied, their errors are multiplied alſo; and that conſequently every ſuch edition is more or leſs correct, as it approaches nearer to or is more diſtant from the firſt. A few inſtances of the gradual progreſs of corruption will fully evince the truth of this aſſertion.

In the original copy of *King Richard II.* 4to. 1597, Act II. ſc. ii. are theſe lines:

> "You promis'd, when you parted with the king,
> "To lay aſide *life-harming* heavineſs."

In a ſubſequent quarto, printed in 1608, inſtead of *life-harming* we find HALF-*harming*; which being perceived by the editor of the folio to be nonſenſe, he ſubſtituted, inſtead of it,—SELF-*harming* heavineſs.

In the original copy of *King Henry IV.* P. I. printed in 1598, Act IV. ſc. iv. we find—

> " And what with Owen Glendower's abſence thence,
> " (Who with them was *a rated ſinew* too,)" &c.

In the fourth quarto printed in 1608, the article being omitted by the negligence of the compoſitor, and the line printed thus,—

> " Who with them was rated ſinew too,"—

the editor of the next quarto, (which was copied by the folio,) inſtead of examining the firſt edition, amended the error (leaving the metre ſtill imperfect) by reading—

> " Who with them was *rated firmly* too."

So, in the ſame play, Act I. ſc. iii. inſtead of the reading of the earlieſt copy—

> " Why what a *candy* deal of courteſy—"

caudy being printed in the firſt folio inſtead of *candy*, by the accidental inverſion of the letter *n*, the editor of the ſecond folio corrected the error by ſubſtituting *gawdy*.

So, in the ſame play, Act III. ſc. i. inſtead of the reading of the earlieſt impreſſion,

"The frame and huge foundation of the earth—"

in the ſecond and the ſubſequent quartos, the line by the negligence of the compoſitor was exhibited without the word *huge:*

"The frame and foundation of the earth—"

and the editor of the folio, finding the metre imperfect, ſupplied it by reading,

"The frame and *the* foundation of the earth."

Another line in Act V. ſc. ult. is thus exhibited in the quarto, 1598:

"But that the *earthy* and cold hand of death—"

Earth being printed inſtead of *earthy*, in the next and the ſubſequent quarto copies, the editor of the folio amended the line thus:

"But that the *earth* and *the* cold hand of death—."

Again, in the preceding ſcene, we find in the firſt copy,

"I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot—."

inſtead of which, in the fifth quarto, 1613, we have—

"I was not born *to yield*, thou proud Scot."

This being the copy that was uſed by the editor of the folio, inſtead of examining the moſt ancient impreſſion, he corrected the error according to his

own fancy, and probably while the work was paſſing through the preſs, by reading—

" I was not born *to yield,* thou *haughty* Scot."

In *Romeo and Juliet,* Juliet ſays to her Nurſe,

" In faith, I am ſorry that thou art not well."

and this line in the firſt folio being corruptly exhibited—

" In faith, I am ſorry that thou art *ſo* well."

the editor of the ſecond folio, to obtain ſome ſenſe, printed—,

" In faith, I am ſorry that th[illegible] art *ſo ill.*"

In the quarto copy of the ſame play, publiſhed in 1599, we find—

" ——————— O happy dagger,
" This is thy ſheath; there ruſt, and let me die."

In the next quarto, 1609, the laſt line is thus repreſented:

" *'Tis* is thy ſheath," &c.

The editor of the folio, ſeeing that this was manifeſtly wrong, abſurdly corrected the error thus:

" 'Tis *in* thy ſheath; there ruſt, and let me die."

Again, in the ſame play, quarto, 1599, *miſhav'd* being corruptly printed for *miſbehav'd,*—

" But like a *miſhav'd* and ſullen wench—"

the editor of the firſt folio, to obtain ſomething like ſenſe, reads—

" But like a *miſhap'd* and ſullen wench—."

and inſtead of this, the editor of the ſecond folio, for the ſake of metre, gives us—

" But like a *miſhap'd* and *a* ſullen wench—

Again, in the firſt ſcene of *King Richard III.* quarto, 1597, we find this line:

" That *tempers* him to this extremity."

In the next quarto, and all ſubſequent, *tempts* is corruptly printed inſtead of *tempers*. The line then wanting a ſyllable, the editor of the folio printed it thus:

" That *tempts* him to this *harſh* extremity."

Not to weary my reader, I ſhall add but two more inſtances, from *Romeo and Juliet:*

" Away to heaven, reſpective lenity,
" And *fire-ey'd* fury be my conduct now!"

ſays Romeo, when provoked by the appearance of his rival. Inſtead of this, which is the reading of the quarto 1597, the line, in the quarto, 1599, is thus corruptly exhibited:

" And fire *end* fury be my conduct now!"

In the ſubſequent quarto copy *and* was ſubſtituted for *end*; and accordingly in the folio the poet's fine imagery is entirely loſt, and Romeo exclaims,

" And *fire and fury* be my conduct now!"

The other inſtance in the ſame play is not leſs remarkable. In the quarto, 1599, the Friar, addreſſing Romeo, is made to ſay,

" Thou *puts up* thy fortune, and thy love."

The editor of the folio perceiving here a groſs corruption, ſubſtituted theſe words:

" Thou *putteſt up* thy fortune, and thy love;"

not perceiving that *up* was a miſprint for *upon*, and *puts* for *pouts*, (which according to the ancient mode was written inſtead of *powt'ſt*,) as he would have found by looking into another copy without a date, and as he might have conjectured from the correſponding line in the original play printed in 1597, had he ever examined it:

" Thou *frown'ſt upon* thy fate, that ſmiles on thee."

So little known indeed was the value of the early impreſſions of books, (not reviſed or corrected by their authors,) that King Charles the Firſt, though a great admirer of our poet, was contented with the *ſecond* folio edition of his plays, unconſcious of the numerous miſrepreſentations and interpolations by which every page of that copy is diſfigured; and in a volume of the quarto plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, which formerly belonged to that king, and is now in my collection, I did not find a ſingle firſt impreſſion. In like manner, Sir William D'Avenant, when he made his alteration of the play of *Macbeth*, appears to have uſed the third folio printed in 1664.[8]

[8] In that copy *anoint* being corruptly printed inſtead of *aroint*,
" *Anoint* thee, witch, the rump-fed ronyon cries,"
the error was implicitly adopted by D'Avenant.

The various readings found in the different impreſſions of the quarto copies are frequently mentioned by the late editors: it is obvious from what has been already ſtated, that the firſt edition of each play is alone of any authority,[9] and accordingly to no other have I paid any attention. All the variations in the ſubſequent quartos were made by accident or caprice. Where, however, there are two editions printed in the ſame year, or an undated copy, it is neceſſary to examine each of them, becauſe which of them was firſt, can not be aſcertained; and being each printed from a manuſcript, they carry with them a degree of authority to which a re-impreſſion cannot be entitled. Of the tragedy of *King Lear* there are no leſs than three copies, varying from each other, printed for the ſame bookſeller, and in the ſame year.

Of all the plays of which there are no quarto copies extant, the firſt folio, printed in 1623, is the only authentick edition.

An opinion has been entertained by ſome that the ſecond impreſſion of that book, publiſhed in 1632, has a ſimilar claim to authenticity. "Whoever has any of the folios, (ſays Dr. Johnſon,) has all, excepting thoſe diverſities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards uſed only the firſt, from which (he afterwards adds,) the ſubſequent folios never differ but by accident or negligence." Mr. Steevens, however, does not ſubſcribe to this opinion. "The edition of 1632,

[9] Except only in the inſtance of *Romeo and Juliet*, where the firſt copy, printed in 1597, appears to be an imperfect ſketch, and therefore cannot be entirely relied on. Yet even this furniſhes many valuable corrections of the more perfect copy of that tragedy in its preſent ſtate, printed in 1599.

(ſays that gentleman,) is not without value; for though it be in ſome places more incorrectly printed than the preceding one, it has likewiſe the advantage of various readings, which are not merely ſuch as re-iteration of copies will naturally produce."

What Dr. Johnſon has ſtated, is not quite accurate. The ſecond folio does indeed very frequently differ from the firſt by negligence or chance; but much more frequently by the editor's profound ignorance of our poet's phraſeology and metre, in conſequence of which there is ſcarce a page of the book which is not disfigured by the capricious alterations introduced by the perſon to whom the care of that impreſſion was entruſted. This perſon in fact, whoever he was, and Mr. Pope, were the two great corrupters of our poet's text; and I have no doubt that if the arbitrary alterations introduced by theſe two editors were numbered, in the plays of which no quarto copies are extant, they would greatly exceed all the corruptions and errors of the preſs in the original and only authentick copy of thoſe plays. Though my judgment on this ſubject has been formed after a very careful examination, I cannot expect that it ſhould be received on my mere aſſertion: and therefore it is neceſſary to ſubſtantiate it by proof. This cannot be affected but by a long, minute, and what I am afraid will appear to many, an unintereſting diſquiſition: but let it ſtill be remembered that to aſcertain the genuine text of theſe plays is an object of great importance.

On a reviſion of the ſecond folio printed in 1632, it will be found, that the editor of that book was entirely ignorant of our poet's phraſeology and metre, and that various alterations were made by

him, in conſequence of that ignorance, which render his edition of no value whatſoever.

I. His ignorance of Shakſpeare's phraſeology is proved by the following among many other inſtances.

He did not know that the double negative was the cuſtomary and authorized language of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and therefore, inſtead of—

"Nor to her bed *no* homage do I owe."
Comedy of Errors, Act III. ſc. ii.

he printed—

"Nor to her bed *a* homage do I owe."

So, in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. iv. inſtead of—"I can *not* go no further," he printed—"I can go no further."

In *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III. ſc. i. Hero, ſpeaking of Beatrice, ſays,

"———there will ſhe hide her,
"*To liſten our purpoſe.*"

for which the ſecond folio ſubſtitutes—

"———there will ſhe hide her,
"To liſten *to* our *purpoſe*."

Again, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. ſc. ii:

"Thou doſt make poſſible, things not ſo held."

The plain meaning is, thou doſt make thoſe things poſſible, which are held to be impoſſible. But the editor of the ſecond folio, not underſtanding the line, reads—

"Thou doſt make poſſible things not *to be* ſo held;"

i. e. thou doſt make thoſe things to be eſteemed impoſſible, which are poſſible: the very reverſe of what the poet meant.

In the ſame play is this line:

" I am appointed *him* to murder you."

Here the editor of the ſecond folio, not being converſant with Shakſpeare's irregular language, reads—

" I *appointed him* to murder you."

Again, in *Macbeth*:

" This diamond he greets your wife withal,
" By the name of moſt kind hoſteſs; and *ſhut up*
" In meaſureleſs content."

Not knowing that *ſhut up* meant *concluded*, the editor of the ſecond folio reads—

" ——— and ſhut *it* up [i. e. the diamond]
" In meaſureleſs content."

In the ſame play the word *lated*, (" Now ſpurs the '*lated* traveller—") not being underſtood, is changed to *lateſt*, and Colmes-*Inch* to Colmes-*hill*.

Again, *ibidem*: when Macbeth ſays, " Hang thoſe that talk of fear," it is evident that theſe words are not a wiſh or imprecation, but an injunction to hang all the cowards in Scotland. The editor of the ſecond folio, however, conſidering the paſſage in the former light, reads:

" Hang them that *ſtand in* fear."

From the ſame ignorance,

" And all our yeſterdays have lighted fools
" The way to *duſty* death."

is changed to—

" And all our yeſterdays have lighted fools
" The way to *ſtudy* death."

In *King Richard II.* Bolingbroke ſays,

" And I muſt find that title in your *tongue*," &c.

i. e. you muſt addreſs me by that title. But this not being underſtood, *town* is in the ſecond folio ſubſtituted for *tongue*.

The double comparative is common in the plays of Shakſpeare. Yet, inſtead of

" ——— I'll give my reaſons
" *More worthier* than their voices."
Coriolanus, Act III. ſc. i. Firſt Folio.

we have in the ſecond copy,

" More *worthy* than their voices."

So, in *Othello*, Act I. ſc. v.—" opinion, a ſovereign miſtreſs of effects, throws a more *ſafer* voice on you,"—is changed in the ſecond folio, to—" opinion, &c. throws a more *ſafe* voice on you."

Again, in *Hamlet*, Act III. ſc. ii. inſtead of—" your wiſdom ſhould ſhow itſelf more *richer*, to ſignify this to the doctor;" we find in the copy of 1632, " ——your wiſdom ſhould ſhow itſelf more *rich*," &c.

In *The Winter's Tale*, the word *vaſt* not being underſtood,

" —— they ſhook hands as over a *vaſt*." Firſt Folio.

we find in the ſecond copy, "—as over a vaſt *ſea.*"

In *King John*, Act V. ſc. v. firſt folio, are theſe lines:

"———The Engliſh lords
"By his perſuaſion are *again* fallen off."

The editor of the ſecond folio, thinking, I ſuppoſe, that as theſe lords had not *before* deſerted the *French* king, it was improper to ſay that they had *again* fallen off, ſubſtituted "—are *at laſt* fallen off;" not perceiving that the meaning is, that theſe lords had gone back again to their own countrymen, whom they had before deſerted.

In *King Henry VIII.* Act II. ſc. ii. Norfolk, ſpeaking of Wolſey, ſays, "I'll venture one *have* at him." This being miſunderſtood, is changed in the ſecond copy to—"I'll venture one *heave* at him."

Julius Cæſar likewiſe furniſhes various ſpecimens of his ignorance of Shakſpeare's language. The phraſe, to *bear hard*, not being underſtood, inſtead of—

"Caius Ligarius doth *bear* Cæſar *hard.*" Firſt Folio.

we find in the ſecond copy,

"Caius Ligarius doth bear Cæſar *hatred.*"

and from the ſame cauſe the words *dank*, *bleſt*, and *hurtled*, are diſmiſſed from the text, and more familiar words ſubſtituted in their room.[1]

"To walk unbraced, and ſuck up the humours
"Of the *dank* morning." Firſt Folio.
"Of the *dark* morning." Second Folio.

"We are *bleſt* that Rome is rid of him." Firſt Folio.
"We are *glad* that Rome is rid of him." Second Folio.

"The noiſe of battle *hurtled* in the air." Firſt Folio.
"The noiſe of battle *hurried* in the air." Second Folio.

In like manner in the third Act of *Coriolanus*, ſc. ii. the ancient verb to *owe*, i. e. to poſſeſs, is diſcarded by this editor, and *own* ſubſtituted in its place.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we find in the original copy theſe lines:

" ——— I ſay again, thy ſpirit
" Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
" But he *alway*, 'tis noble."

Inſtead of reſtoring the true word *away*, which was thus corruptly exhibited, the editor of the ſecond folio, without any regard to the context, altered another part of the line, and abſurdly printed—" But he *alway is* noble."

In the ſame play, Act I. ſc. iii. Cleopatra ſays to Charmian—" *Quick* and return;" for which the editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing that *quick* was either uſed adverbially, or elliptically for *Be quick*, ſubſtitutes—" *Quickly*, and return."

In *Timon of Athens*, are theſe lines:

" And that unaptneſs made your miniſter
" Thus to excuſe yourſelf."

i. e. and made that unaptneſs your miniſter to excuſe yourſelf; or, in other words, availed yourſelf of that unaptneſs as an excuſe for your own conduct. The words being inverted and put out of their natural order, the editor of the ſecond folio ſuppoſed that *unaptneſs*, being placed firſt, muſt be the nominative caſe, and therefore reads—

" And that unaptneſs made *you* miniſter,
" Thus to excuſe yourſelf."

In that play, from the ſame ignorance, inſtead of Timon's exhortation to the thieves, to kill as

well as rob.—"Take wealth and *lives* together," we find in the ſecond copy, "Take wealth, and *live* together." And with equal ignorance and licentiouſneſs this editor altered the epitaph on Timon, to render it what he thought metrical, by leaving out various words. In the original edition it appears as it does in Plutarch, and therefore we may be certain that the variations in the ſecond copy were here, as in other places, all arbitrary and capricious.

Again, in the ſame play, we have—

"*I* defil'd land."

and—

"O, my good lord, the world is but a *word*," &c.

The editor not underſtanding either of theſe paſſages, and ſuppoſing that *I* in the firſt of them was uſed as a perſonal pronoun, (whereas it ſtands according to the uſage of that time for the affirmative particle, *ay*,) reads in the firſt line,

"*I defy* land;"

and exhibits the other line thus:

"O, my good lord, the world is but a *world*," &c.

Our author and the contemporary writers generally write *wars*, not *war*, &c. The editor of the ſecond folio being unappriſed of this, reads in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. ſc. v: "Cæſar having made uſe of him in the *war* againſt Pompey,"—inſtead of *wars*, the reading of the original copy.

The ſeventh ſcene of the fourth act of this play

concludes with theſe words: "Deſpatch.—Enobarbus!" Antony, who is the ſpeaker, deſires his attendant *Eros* to deſpatch, and then pronounces the name *Enobarbus*, who had recently deſerted him, and whoſe loſs he here laments. But there being no perſon on the ſcene but Eros, and the point being inadvertently omitted after the word *diſpatch*, the editor of the ſecond folio ſuppoſed that Enobarbus muſt have been an error of the preſs, and therefore reads:

"Diſpatch, *Eros*."

In *Troilus and Creſsida*, Creſſida ſays,

"Things won are done; *joy's ſoul* lies in the doing."

i. e. the *ſoul of joy* lies, &c. So, "*love's* viſible *ſoul*," and "my *ſoul of counſel*;" expreſſions likewiſe uſed by Shakſpeare. Here alſo the editor of the ſecond folio exhibits equal ignorance of his author; for inſtead of this eminently beautiful expreſſion, he has given us—

"Things won are done; *the ſoul's joy* lies in doing."

In *King Richard III.* Ratcliff, addreſſing the lords at Pomfret, ſays,

"Make haſte, the hour of death is *expiate*."

for which the editor of the ſecond folio, alike ignorant of the poet's language and metre, has ſubſtituted,

"Make haſte, the hour of death is *now expir'd*."

So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

"The earth hath ſwallow'd all my hopes but ſhe."

The word *The* being accidentally omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond ſupplied the defect by reading—

" Earth hath *up* ſwallow'd all my hopes but ſhe."

Again, in the ſame play; " I'll lay fourteen of my teeth, and yet, to my *teen* be it ſpoken, I have but four:" not underſtanding the word *teen*, he ſubſtituted *teeth* inſtead of it.

Again, *ibidem*:

" Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *maid*—"

Man being corruptly printed inſtead of *maid* in the firſt folio, 1623, the editor of the ſecond, who never examined a ſingle quarto copy,[2] corrected the error at random, by reading—

[2] That this editor never examined any of the quarto copies, is proved by the following inſtances:

In *Troilus and Creſſida*, we find in the firſt folio:

" ——— the remainder viands
" We do not throw in unreſpective *ſame*,
" Becauſe we now are full."

Finding this nonſenſe, he printed " in unreſpective *place*." In the quarto he would have found the true word—*ſieve*.

Again, in the ſame play, the following lines are thus corruptly exhibited:

" That all the Greeks *begin to* worſhip Ajax;
" Since things in motion *begin to* catch the eye,
" Than what not ſtirs."

the words—" *begin to*," being inadvertently repeated in the ſecond line, by the compoſitor's eye glancing on the line above.

The editor of the ſecond folio, inſtead of examining the quarto, where he would have found the true reading:

" Since things in motion *ſooner* catch the eye."

thought only of amending the metre, and printed the line thus

" Since things in motion *'gin* to catch the eye—"

leaving the paſſage nonſenſe, as he found it.

So, in *Titus Andronicus*:

" And let no *comfort* delight mine ear—"

" Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *woman*."

Again:

" Doſt thou love me? I know thou wilt ſay, ay:"

The word *me* being omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond capriciouſly ſupplied the metre thus:

being erroneouſly printed in the firſt folio, inſtead of " And let no *comforter*," &c. the editor of the ſecond folio corrected the error according to his fancy, by reading—

" And let no *comfort elſe* delight mine ear."

So, in *Love's Labour's Loſt*, Vol. VII. p. 96: " Old Mantuan, who underſtands thee not, *loves thee not*." The words in the Italick character being inadvertently omitted in the firſt folio, the editor of the ſecond folio, inſtead of applying to the quarto to cure the defect, printed the paſſage juſt as he found it: and in like manner in the ſame play implicitly followed the error of the firſt folio, which has been already mentioned,—

" O, that your face were ſo full of *O's*—"

though the omiſſion of the word *not*, which is found in the quarto, made the paſſage nonſenſe.

So, in *Much Ado about Nothing*:

" And I will break with her. Was't not to this end," &c.

being printed inſtead of—

" And I will break with her *and with her father*,

" *And thou ſhalt have her*. Was't not to this end," &c.

the error, which aroſe from the compoſitor's eye glancing from one line to the other, was implicitly adopted in the ſecond folio.

Again, in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*:

" *Ah me*, for aught that I could ever read,

" Could ever hear," &c.

the words *Ah me* being accidentally omitted in the firſt folio, inſtead of applying to the quarto for the true reading, he ſupplied the defect, according to his own fancy, thus:

" *Hermia*, for aught that I could ever read," &c.

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice*, he arbitrarily gives us—

" The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold*,"

inſtead of—

" *Why he hath made* the ewe bleat for the lamb."

See p. 454. Innumerable other inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced.

" Doſt thou love? *O*, I know thou wilt ſay, ay."

This expletive, we ſhall preſently find, when I come to ſpeak of the poet's metre, was his conſtant expedient in all difficulties.

In *Meaſure for Meaſure* he printed *ignominy* inſtead of *ignomy*, the reading of the firſt folio, and the common language of the time. In the ſame play, from his ignorance of the conſtable's humour, he corrected his phraſeology, and ſubſtituted *inſtant* for *diſtant*; (" —at that very diſtant time:") and in like manner he makes Dogberry, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, exhort the watch not to be *vigitant*, but *vigilant*.

Among the marks of love, Roſalind, in *As you like it*, mentions " a beard neglected, which you have not;—but I pardon you for that; for, ſimply, your *having in* beard is a younger brother's revenue." Not underſtanding the meaning of the word *having*, this editor reads—" your having *no* beard," &c.

In *A Midſummer Night's Dream*, Pyramus ſays,

" I *ſee* a voice; now will I to the chink,
" To ſpy an' I can *hear* my Thiſby's face."

Of the humour of this paſſage he had not the leaſt notion, for he printed, inſtead of it,

" I *hear* a voice; now will I to the chink,
" To ſpy an' I can *ſee* my Thiſby's face."

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I. ſc. i. we find in the firſt folio,

" And out of doubt you do more wrong—"

which the editor of the ſecond perceiving to be imperfect, he corrected at random thus:

" And out of doubt you do *to me* more wrong."

Had he conſulted the original quarto, he would have found that the poet wrote—

" And out of doubt you do *me now* more wrong."

So, in the ſame play,—" But *of* mine, then yours," being corruptly printed inſtead of—" But *if* mine, then yours," this editor arbitrarily reads—" But *firſt* mine, then yours."

Again, *ibidem:*

" Or even as well uſe queſtion with the wolf,
" The ewe bleat for the lamb."

the words " *Why he hath made*" being omitted in the firſt folio at the beginning of the ſecond line, the ſecond folio editor ſupplied the defect thus abſurdly:

" Or even as well uſe queſtion with the wolf,
" The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold.*"

In *Othello* the word *ſnipe* being miſprinted in the firſt folio,

" If I ſhould time expend with ſuch a *ſnpe.*"

the editor not knowing what to make of it, ſubſtituted *ſwain* inſtead of the corrupted word.

Again, in the ſame play,

" *For* of my heart thoſe charms, thine eyes, are blotted."

being printed in the firſt folio inſtead of—" *Forth* of my heart," &c. which was the common language of the time, the editor of the ſecond folio amended the error according to his fancy, by reading—

" *For off* my heart thoſe charms, thine eyes, are blotted."

Again, in the ſame play, Act V. ſc. i. not underſtanding the phraſeology of our author's time,

" Who's there? Whoſe noiſe is this, that *cries on* murder?"

he ſubſtituted—

" Whoſe noiſe is this, that cries *out* murder?"

and in the firſt Act of the ſame play, not perceiving the force of an eminently beautiful epithet, for " deſarts *idle*," he has given us " deſarts *wild*."

Again, in that tragedy we find—

" ——————— what charms,
" What conjuration, and what mighty magick,
" (For ſuch proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
" I won his daughter."

that is, I won his daughter *with*; and ſo the editor of the ſecond folio reads, not knowing that this kind of elliptical expreſſion frequently occurs in this author's works, as I have ſhown in a note on the laſt ſcene of *Cymbeline*, and in other places.[3]

In like manner he has corrupted the following paſſage in *A Midſummer-Night's Dream*:

" So will I grow, ſo live, ſo die, my lord,
" Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
" Unto his lordſhip, *whoſe unwiſhed* yoke
" My ſoul conſents not to give ſovereignty."

i. e. to give ſovereignty *to*. Here too this editor has unneceſſarily tampered with the text, and

[3] See Vol. XVIII. p. 647, n. 2; Vol. XV. p. 196, n. 4; and Vol. XIX. p. 266, n. 7.

having contracted the word *unwiſhed*, he exhibited the line thus:

> " Unto his lordſhip, *to* whoſe *unwiſh'd* yoke
> " My ſoul conſents not to give ſovereignty."

an interpolation which was adopted in the ſubſequent copies, and which, with all the modern editors, I incautiouſly ſuffered to remain in the preſent edition.[4]

The grave-digger in *Hamlet* obſerves " that your tanner will laſt you nine *year*," and ſuch is the phraſeology which Shakſpeare always attributes to his lower characters; but inſtead of this, in the ſecond folio, we find—" nine *years*."

> " Your ſkill ſhall, like a ſtar i'the *darkeſt* night,
> " Stick fiery off indeed.—"

ſays Hamlet to Laertes. But the editor of the ſecond folio, conceiving, I ſuppoſe, that if a ſtar appeared with extraordinary ſcintillation, the night muſt neceſſarily be luminous, reads—" i'the *brighteſt* night:" and, with equal ſagacity, not acquieſcing in Edgar's notion of " *four-inch'd* bridges," this editor has furniſhed him with a much ſafer paſs, for he reads—" *four-arch'd* bridges."

In *King Henry VIII.* are theſe lines:

> " ——— If we did think
> " His *contemplation* were above the earth—"

Not underſtanding this phraſeology, and ſuppoſing that *were* muſt require a noun in the plural number, he reads:

[4] See Vol. IV. p. 322, n. 7.

" ——— If we did think
" His *contemplations* were above the earth," &c.

Again, in *Troilus and Creſsida*, Act IV. ſc. ii:

" With wings more *momentary-ſwift* than thought."

This compound epithet not being underſtood, he reads:

" With wings more *momentary, ſwifter* than thought."

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act I. ſc. ii. Hortenſio, deſcribing Catharine, ſays,

" Her only fault (and that is—*faults* enough)
" Is,—that ſhe is intolerable curſt;—"

meaning, that this one was *a hoſt of faults*. But this not being comprehended by the editor of the ſecond folio, with a view, doubtleſs, of rendering the paſſage more grammatical, he ſubſtituted—" and that is *fault* enough."

So, in *King Lear*, we find—" Do you know this noble gentleman?" But this editor ſuppoſing, it ſhould ſeem, that a gentleman could not be noble, or that a noble could not be a gentleman, inſtead of the original text, reads—" Do you know this *nobleman?*"

In *Meaſure for Meaſure*, Act II. ſc. i. Eſcalus, addreſſing the Juſtice, ſays, " I pray you home to dinner with me:" this familiar diction not being underſtood, we find in the ſecond folio, " I pray you *go* home to dinner with me." And in *Othello*, not having ſagacity enough to ſee that *apiſes* was printed by a mere tranſpoſition of the letters, for *paines*,

" Though I do hate him, as I do hell *apines*,"

inſtead of correcting the word, he evaded the difficulty by omitting it, and exhibited the line in an imperfect ſtate.

The Duke of York, in the third part of *King Henry VI.* exclaims,

> " That face of his the hungry cannibals
> " Would not have touch'd, would not have ſtain'd with blood."

Theſe lines being thus carefully arranged in the firſt folio:

> " That face of his
> " The hungry cannibals would not have touch'd,
> " Would not have ſtain'd with blood—"

the editor of the ſecond folio, leaving the firſt line imperfect as he found it, completed the laſt line by this abſurd interpolation:

> " Would not have ſtain'd *the roſes juſt* with blood."

Theſe are but a few of the numerous corruptions and interpolations found in that copy, from the editor's ignorance of Shakſpeare's phraſeology.

II. Let us now examine how far he was acquainted with the metre of theſe plays.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act III. ſc. ii. we find—

> " What wheels? racks? fires? what ſlaying? boiling?
> " In leads, or oils?"——

Not knowing that *fires* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he added the word *burning* at the end of the line:

> " What wheels? racks? fires? what ſlaying? boiling?
> *burning?*"

So again, in *Julius Cæſar*, Act III. ſc. ii. from the ſame ignorance, the word *all* has been interpolated by this editor:

" And with the brands *fire all* the traitors' houſes."

inſtead of the reading of the original and authentick copy,

" And with the brands *fire* the traitors' houſes."

Again, in *Macbeth:*

" I would, while it was ſmiling in my face,
" Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneleſs gums,
" And daſh'd the brains out, had I ſo *ſworn*
" As you have done to this."

Not perceiving that *ſworn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he reads—" had I *but* ſo ſworn."

Charms our poet ſometimes uſes as a word of two ſyllables. Thus, in *The Tempeſt*, Act I. ſc. ii:

" Curs'd be I, that did ſo! All the *charms*," &c.

inſtead of which this editor gives us,

" Curs'd be I, that *I* did ſo! All the charms," &c.

Hour is almoſt always uſed by Shakſpeare as a diſſyllable, but of this the editor of the ſecond folio was ignorant; for inſtead of theſe lines in *King Richard II:*

" ——So ſighs, and tears, and groans,
" Show minutes, times, and *hours:* but my time
" Runs poſting on," &c.

he gives us—

" ——— So ſighs, and tears, and groans,
" Show minutes, times, and hours: *O* but my time,"[5] &c.

So again, in *The Comedy of Errors:*

" I'll meet you in that place, ſome *hour, ſir,* hence."

inſtead of the original reading,

" I'll meet you in that place ſome *hour* hence."

Again, in *The Winter's Tale,* Act I. ſc. ii:

" ——— wiſhing clocks more ſwift?
" Hours, minutes? *the* noon, midnight? and all eyes," &c.

inſtead of the original reading,

" Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes," &c.

Again, in *All's well that ends well,* Act II. ſc. iii:

[5] In *Meaſure for Meaſure* we find theſe lines:
" ——— Merciful heaven!
" Thou rather, with thy ſharp and ſulphurous bolt,
" Split'ſt the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,
" Than the ſoft mirtle;—But man, proud man," &c.
There can be no doubt that a word was omitted in the laſt line; perhaps ſome epithet to *mirtle.* But the editor of the ſecond folio, reſorting to his uſual expedient, abſurdly reads:
" Than the ſoft mirtle. *O* but man, proud man,—."
So, in *Titus Andronicus,* Act III. ſc. ii: *complaynet* being corruptly printed inſtead of *complayner,*
" Speechleſs *complaynet,* I will learn thy thoughts,—"
this editor, with equal abſurdity, reads:
" Speechleſs *complaint, O,* I will learn thy thoughts."
I have again and again had occaſion to mention in the notes on theſe plays, that *omiſſion* is of all the errors of the preſs that which moſt frequently happens. On collating the fourth edition of *King Richard III.* printed in 1612, with the ſecond printed in 1598, I found no leſs than *twenty-ſix* words omitted.

" Which challenges itſelf as honours born,
" And is not like the *fire*. Honours thrive," &c.

This editor, not knowing that *fire* was uſed as a diſſyllable reads:

" And is not like the fire. Honours *beſt* thrive," &c.

So, in *King Henry VI.* P. I:

" Reſcued is Orleans from the *Engliſh*."

Not knowing that *Engliſh* was uſed as a triſyllable, he has completed the line, which he ſuppoſed defective, according to his own fancy, and reads:

" Reſcu'd is Orleans from the Engliſh *wolves*."

The ſame play furniſhes us with various other proofs of his ignorance of our poet's metre. Thus, inſtead of

" Orleans the baſtard, Charles, Burgundy,—"

he has printed (not knowing that *Charles* was uſed as a word of two ſyllables,)

" Orleans the baſtard, Charles, *and* Burgundy."

So, inſtead of the original reading,

" Divineſt creature, Aſtræa's daughter,—"

(*Aſtræa* being uſed as a word of three ſyllables,) he has printed—

" Divineſt creature, *bright* Aſtræa's daughter."

Again, *ibidem*:

" Whereas the contrary bringeth bliſs."

Not knowing that *contrary* was uſed as a word of four ſyllables, he reads:

" Whereas the contrary bringeth *forth* bliſs."

So *ſure* is uſed in the ſame play, as a diſſyllable:

" Gloſter, we'll meet: to thy coſt, be *ſure*."

but this editor, not aware of this, reads:

" Gloſter, we'll meet; to thy *dear* coſt, be ſure."

Again, in *King Henry VI.* P. II.

" And ſo to *arms*, victorious father,—"

arms being uſed as a diſſyllable. But the ſecond folio reads:

" And ſo to arms, victorious *noble* father."

Again, in *Twelfth-Night*, Act I. ſc. i. we find—

" ——— when liver, brain, and heart,
" Theſe ſovereign thrones, are all ſupply'd, and fill'd,
" (Her ſweet perfections) with one ſelf-king."

for which the editor, not knowing that *perfections* was uſed as a quadriſyllable, has ſubſtituted—

" ——— when liver, brain, and heart,
" Theſe ſovereign thrones, are all ſupply'd, and fill'd,
" (Her ſweet perfections) with one *ſelf-ſame* king."

Again, in *King Henry VI.* P. II:

" Prove it, *Henry*, and thou ſhalt be king."

for which the editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing *Henry* to be uſed as a triſyllable, gives us,

" *But* prove it, Henry, and thou ſhalt be king."

In like manner *dazzled* is uſed by Shakſpeare as a triſyllable in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II. ſc. iv:

" And that hath *dazzled* my reaſon's light."

inſtead of which, we find in the ſecond folio,

" And that hath dazzled *ſo* my reaſon's light."

The words *neither*, *rather*, &c. are frequently uſed by Shakſpeare as words of one ſyllable. So, in *King Henry VI.* P. III:

" And *neither* by treaſon, nor hoſtility,
" To ſeek to put me down—."

for which the editor of the ſecond folio has given us,

" Neither by treaſon, nor hoſtility," &c.

In *Timon of Athens*, Act III. ſc. v. Alcibiades aſks,

" Is this the balſam, that the uſuring ſenate
" *Pours* into captains' wounds? baniſhment?"

The editor of the ſecond folio, not knowing that *pours* was uſed as a diſſyllable, to complete the ſuppoſed defect in the metre, reads:

" Is this the balſam, that the uſuring ſenate
" Pours into captains' wounds! *ha!* baniſhment?"

Tickled is often uſed by Shakſpeare and the contemporary poets, as a word of three ſyllables. So, in *King Henry VI.* P. II:

" She's *tickled* now; her fume *needs* no ſpurs."

inſtead of which, in the ſecond folio we have,—

" She's tickled now; her fume *can need* no ſpurs."

So, in *Titus Andronicus*, Act II. ſc. i:

" Better than he have *worn* Vulcan's badge."

This editor, not knowing that *worn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, reads:

" Better than he have *yet* worn Vulcan's badge."

Again, in *Cymbeline*, Act II. ſc. v:

" All faults that name, nay, that hell knows, why hers,
" In part, or all; but rather all: for even to vice," &c.

Theſe lines being thus careleſsly diſtributed in the original copy,—

" All faults that name, nay, that hell knows,
" Why hers, in part, or all; but rather all:" &c.

the editor of the ſecond folio, to ſupply the defect of the firſt line, arbitrarily reads, with equal ignorance of his author's metre and phraſeology,

" All faults that *may be named*, nay, that hell knows,
" Why hers," &c.

In *King Henry IV.* P. II. Act I. ſc. iii. is this line:

" And being now trimm'd in thine own deſires,—."

inſtead of which the editor of the ſecond folio, to remedy a ſuppoſed defect in the metre, has given us—

" And being now trimm'd *up* in thine own deſires,— "

Again, in *As you like it*, Act II. ſc. i:

" ——— he pierceth through
" The body of city, country, court,—."

inſtead of which we find in the ſecond folio, (the editor not knowing that *country* was uſed as a triſyllable,)

" ——————— he pierceth through
" The body of city, *the* country, court."

In like manner, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. ſc. i. he has given us:

" ——————— we knew not
" The doctrine of ill-doing, *no* nor dream'd
" That any did:——"

inſtead of—

" ——————— we knew not
" The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd," &c.

doctrine being uſed as a word of three ſyllables.

" Pay him ſix thouſand," &c. ſays Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*,

" Before a friend of this deſcription
" Should loſe a hair through Baſſanio's fault."

the word *hair* being uſed as a diſſyllable, or *Baſſanio* as a quadriſyllable. Of this the editor of the ſecond folio was wholly ignorant, and therefore reads:

" Should loſe a hair through *my* Baſſanio's fault."

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV. ſc. iii. Florizel, addreſſing Perdita, ſays,

" ——————— my deſires
" Run not before mine honour; nor my luſts
" *Burn* hotter than my faith."

To complete the laſt hemiſtich, Perdita is made to reply,

" O but, ſir,
" Your reſolution cannot hold."

Here again this editor betrays his ignorance of Shakſpeare's metre; for not knowing that *burn* was uſed as a diſſyllable, he reads—

" O but, *dear* ſir," &c.

Again, in *King Henry VIII.* Act II. ſc. iii. the Old Lady declares to Anne Boleyn,

" 'Tis ſtrange; a three-pence bow'd would *hire* me,
" Old as I am, to queen it."

But inſtead of this, *hire* not being perceived to be uſed as a word of two ſyllables, we find in the ſecond folio,

" 'Tis ſtrange; a three-pence bow'd *now* would hire me," &c.

This editor, indeed, was even ignorant of the author's manner of accenting words, for in *The Tempeſt*, where we find,

" ——— Spirits, which by mine art
" I have from their *confines* call'd to enact
" My preſent fancies,—"

he exhibits the ſecond line thus:

" I have from *all* their cónfines call'd to enact," &c.

Again, in *King Lear*, Act II. ſc. i. inſtead of—

" To have the expence and waſte of *his* revénues,—"

the latter word, being, I ſuppoſe, differently accented after our poet's death, the editor of the ſecond folio has given us,

" To have the expence and waſte of révenues."

Various other inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced; but that I may not weary my readers, I will only add, that no perſon who wiſhes to peruſe the plays of Shakſpeare ſhould ever open the Second Folio, or either of the ſubſequent copies, in which all theſe capricious alterations were adopted, with many additional errors and innovations.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that the perſon to whom the care of ſuperviſing the ſecond folio was conſigned, ſhould have been thus ignorant of our poet's language: but it ſhould be remembered, that in the beginning of the reign of Charles the Firſt many words and modes of ſpeech began to be diſuſed, which had been common in the age of Queen Elizabeth. The editor of the ſecond folio was probably a young man, perhaps born in the year 1600. That Sir William D'Avenant, who was born in 1605, did not always perfectly underſtand our author's language, is manifeſt from various alterations which he has made in ſome of his pieces. The ſucceſſive Chronicles of Engliſh hiſtory, which were compiled between the years 1540 and 1630, afford indubitable proofs of the gradual change in our phraſeology during that period. Thus a narrative which Hall exhibits in what now appears to us as very uncouth and ancient diction, is again exhibited by Holinſhed, about forty years afterwards, in ſomewhat a leſs rude form; and in the chronicles of Speed and Baker in 1611 and 1630, aſſumes a ſomewhat more poliſhed air. In the ſecond edition of Gaſcoigne's Poems printed in 1587, the editor thought it neceſſary to explain many of the words by placing more familiar terms in the margin, though not much more than twenty years had elapſed

from the time of their compoſition: ſo rapid were at that time the changes in our language.

My late friend Mr. Tyrrwhitt, a man of ſuch candour, accuracy, and profound learning, that his death muſt be conſidered as an irreparable loſs to literature, was of opinion, that in printing theſe plays the original ſpelling ſhould be adhered to, and that we never could be ſure of a perfectly faithful edition, unleſs the firſt folio copy was made the ſtandard, and actually ſent to the preſs, with ſuch corrections as the editor might think proper. By others it was ſuggeſted, that the notes ſhould not be ſubjoined to the text, but placed at the end of each volume, and that they ſhould be accompanied by a complete Gloſſary. The former ſcheme (that of ſending the firſt folio to the preſs) appeared to me liable to many objections; and I am confident that if the notes were detached from the text, many readers would remain uninformed, rather than undergo the trouble occaſioned by perpetual references from one part of a volume to another.

In the preſent edition I have endeavoured to obtain all the advantages which would have reſulted from Mr. Tyrrwhitt's plan, without any of its inconveniences. Having often experienced the fallaciouſneſs of collation by the eye, I determined, after I had adjuſted the text in the beſt manner in my power, to have every proof-ſheet of my work read aloud to me, while I peruſed the firſt folio, for thoſe plays which firſt appeared in that edition; and for all thoſe which had been previouſly printed, the firſt quarto copy, excepting only in the inſtances of *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, and *King Henry V.* which, being either ſketches or imperfect copies, could not be wholly relied

on; and *King Richard III.*[6] of the earlieſt edition of which tragedy I was not poſſeſſed. I had at the ſame time before me a table which I had formed of the variations between the quartos and the folio. By this laborious proceſs not a ſingle innovation, made either by the editor of the ſecond folio, or any of the modern editors, could eſcape me. From the Index to all the words and phraſes explained or illuſtrated in the notes, which I have ſubjoined to this work,[7] every uſe may be derived which the moſt copious Gloſſary could afford; while thoſe readers who are leſs intent on philological inquiries, by the notes being appended to the text, are relieved from the irkſome taſk of ſeeking information in a different volume from that immediately before them.

If it be aſked, what has been the fruit of all this labour, I anſwer, that many innovations, tranſpoſitions, &c. have been detected by this means; many hundred emendations have been made,[8] and, I truſt,

[6] At the time the tragedy of *King Richard III.* was in the preſs, I was obliged to make uſe of the *ſecond* edition printed in 1598; but have ſince been furniſhed with the edition of 1597, which I have collated *verbatim*, and the moſt material variations are noticed in the Appendix.

[7] If the explication of any word or phraſe ſhould appear unſatisfactory, the reader, by turning to the Gloſſarial Index, may know at once whether any additional information has been obtained on the ſubject. Thus, in *Macbeth*, Vol. IV. p. 392, Dr. Warburton's erroneous interpretation of the word *blood-bolter'd* is inſerted; but the true explication of that provincial term may be found in the APPENDIX. So of the phraſe, "*Will you take eggs for money*" in *The Winter's Tale*; and ſome others.

[8] Leſt this aſſertion ſhould be ſuppoſed to be made without evidence, I ſubjoin a liſt of the reſtorations made from the original copy, and ſupported by contemporary uſage, in two plays only; *The Winter's Tale* and *King John*. The lines in the Italick character are exhibited as they appear in the edition of 1778,

a genuine text has been formed. Wherever any

(as being much more correctly printed than that of 1785,) thoſe in the common character as they appear in the preſent edition (i. e. Mr. Malone's, in ten volumes).

THE WINTER'S TALE.

1. " —— *I'll give* you *my commiſſion,*
" *To let him there a month.*" P. 293.
" —— I'll give *him* my commiſſion,
" To let him there a month." P. 125.

2. " ——— *we know not*
" *The doctrine of ill-doing,* no, *nor dream'd*—" P. 295.
" ——— we know not
" The doctrine of ill-doing; nor dream'd—." P. 126.

3. " *As o'er-dy'd blacks, as* winds, *as waters*;—" P. 300.
" As o'er-dy'd blacks, as *wind,* as waters;—" P. 130.

4. " *As ornament oft does.*" P. 302.
" As ornaments oft do." P. 130.

The original copy, with a diſregard of grammar, reads—" As *ornaments* oft *does.*" This inaccuracy has been conſtantly corrected by every editor, wherever it occurs; but the correction ſhould always be made in the verb, and not in the noun.

5. " *Have you not—thought (for cogitation*
" *Reſides not in the man that does not think* it)
" *My wife is ſlippery?*" P. 408.
" Have you not—thought (for cogitation
" Reſides not in the man that does not think)
" My wife is ſlippery?" P. 138.

6. " ——— *wiſhing clocks more ſwift?*
" *Hours, minutes,* the *noon midnight? and all eyes,*—"
P. 408.
" ——— wiſhing clocks more ſwift?
" Hours minutes? noon midnight? and all eyes,—"
P. 139.

7. " ——— *Ay, and thou,—who may'ſt ſee*
" *How I am gall'd*—thou *might'ſt be-ſpice a cup,*—"
P. 309.
" ——— Ay, and thou,—who may'ſt ſee
" How I am galled,—might'ſt be-ſpice a cup,—"
P. 140.

8. ——— " *I'll keep my* ſtable *where*
" *I lodge my wife;*—" P. 325.

deviation is made from the authentick copies,

" I'll keep my *ſtables* where
" I lodge my wife;—" P. 153.

9 " *Reliſh* as *truth like us.*" P. 317.
" Reliſh *a* truth like us." P. 156.

10. " *And I beſeech you, hear me, who* profeſs—" P. 333.
" And I beſeech you hear me, who *profeſſes*—" P. 162.

11. " *This* ſeſſion *to our great grief,*—" P. 343.
" This *ſeſſions* to our great grief,—" P. 170.

12. " *The bug which you* will *fright me with, I ſeek.*" P. 347.
" The bug which you *would* fright me with, I ſeek." P. 175.

13. " *You here ſhall ſwear upon* the *ſword of juſtice,*—" P. 349.
" You here ſhall ſwear upon *this* ſword of juſtice,—" P. 177

14. " *The* ſeſſion *ſhall proceed.*" P. 349.
" The *ſeſſions* ſhall proceed." P. 178.

15. " *Which you knew great; and to the* certain *hazard*
" *Of all incertainties*—" P. 350.
" Which you knew great, and to the hazard
" Of all incertainties—" P. 179.

Some word was undoubtedly omitted at the preſs; (probably *fearful* or *doubtful*;) but I thought it better to exhibit the line in an imperfect ſtate, than to adopt the interpolation made by the editor of the ſecond folio, who has introduced perhaps as unfit a word as could have been choſen.

16. *Through my* dark *ruſt!* and how his piety—" P. 360.
" Thorough my ruſt! and how his piety—" P. 179.

The firſt word of the line is in the old copy by the miſtake of the compoſitor printed *Through.*

17. " *O but* dear *ſir,*—" P. 375.
" O but, ſir,—" P. 200.

18. " *Your diſcontenting father* I'll *ſtrive to qualify,*—" P. 401.
" Your diſcontenting father ſtrive to qualify,—" P. 224.

19. " *If I thought it were* not *a piece of honeſty to acquaint the king withal,* I would *do it.*" P. 407.
" If I thought it were a piece of honeſty to acquaint the king withal, *I'd not* do it." P. 229.

except in the caſe of mere obvious errors of the

20. " *Doſt thou think, for that I inſinuate* or *toze*—" P. 402.
" Doſt thou think, for that I inſinuate *and* toze—" P. 231.

21. " *You might have* ſpoke *a thouſand things*,—". P. 414.
" You might have *ſpoken* a thouſand things,—" P. 235.

22. " *Where we* offend her *now, appear*—" P. 417.
" Where we *offenders* now appear—" P. 237.

23. " *Once more to look on.*
" Sir, *by his command*,—" P. 420.
" Once more to look on *him.*
" By his command,—" P. 240.

24. " —— *like a weather*-beaten *conduit.*" P. 425.
" —— like a weather-*bitten* conduit." P. 246.

25. " ——— *This your ſon-in-law,*
" *And ſon unto the king,* who, *heavens directing,*
" *Is troth-plight to your daughter.*" P. 437.
" ——— This your ſon-in-law,
" And ſon unto the king, (*whom* heavens directing,)
" Is troth-plight to your daughter." P. 257.

KING JOHN.

1. " *Which fault lies on the* hazard *of all husbands.* P. 10.
" Which fault lies on the *hazards* of all huſbands." P. 451.

2. " *'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable,*
" *For your* converſing." P. 14.
" 'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable,
" For your *converſion.*" P. 456.

3. " *Thus leaning on* my *elbow*,—" P. 16.
" Thus leaning on *mine* elbow,—" P. 457.

4. " *With them a baſtard of the* king *deceas'd.*" P. 25.
" With them a baſtard of the *king's* deceas'd." P. 464.

5. " *That thou haſt under-wrought* its *lawful king.*" P. 26.
" That thou haſt under-wrought *his* lawful king." P. 465.

6. " *Say, ſhall the current of our right* run *on?*" P. 37.
" Say, ſhall the current of our right *roam* on?" P. 476.

preſs,[9] the reader is apprized by a note; and every

7. " *And now he feaſts,* mouthing *the fleſh of men,*—."
P. 38.
" And now he feaſts, *mouſing* the fleſh of men,—"
P. 477.

8. " *A greater power than* ye—" P. 39.
" A greater power than *we*—" P. 478.

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[9] That I may be accurately underſtood, I ſubjoin a few of theſe unnoticed corrections:

In *King Henry VI.* P. I. Act I. ſc. vi:
" Thy promiſes are like Adonis' *gardens,*
" That one day bloom'd, and fruitful were the next."
The old copy reads—*garden.*

In *King John,* Act IV. ſc. ii:
" ——— that cloſe aſpect of his
" *Does* ſhew the mood of a much-troubled breaſt."
The old copy reads—*Do.*

Ibidem, Act I. ſc. i:
" 'Tis too reſpective, and too ſociable," &c.
The old copy,—'Tis *two* reſpective," &c.

Again, in the ſame play, we find in the original copy:
" Againſt the *inuoluerable* clouds of heaven."

In *King Henry V.* Act V. ſc. ii:
" Corrupting in *its* own fertility."
The old copy reads—*it.*

In *Timon of Athens,* Act I. ſc. i:
" *Come,* ſhall we in?"
The old copy has—*Comes.*

Ibidem: " Even on their knees, and *hands,*—."
The old copy has—*hand.*

In *Cymbeline,* Act III. ſc. iv:
" The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
" Woman *its* pretty ſelf."
The old copy has—*it.*

It cannot be expected that the page ſhould be encumbered with the notice of ſuch obvious miſtakes of the preſs as are here enumerated. With the exception of errors ſuch as theſe, whenever any emendation has been adopted, it is mentioned in a note, and aſcribed to its author.

emendation that has been adopted, is aſcribed to its proper author. When it is conſidered that

9. " *For grief is proud, and makes his owner* ſtoop." P. 52.
" For grief is proud, and makes his owner *ſtout*."
P. 492.

10. " *O, that a man* would *ſpeak theſe words to me!*"
P. 52.
" O, that a man *ſhould* ſpeak theſe words to me!"
P. 497.

11. " Is't *not amiſs, when it is truly done?*" P. 64.
" *Is* not amiſs, when it is truly done." P. 504.

12. " *Then, in deſpight of* broad-ey'd *watchful day,—*"
P. 72.
" Then, in deſpight of *brooded* watchful day,—"
P. 512.

13. " *A whole armado of* collected *ſail.*" P. 74.
" A whole armado of *convicted* ſail." P. 514.

14. " *And bitter ſhame hath ſpoil'd the ſweet* world's *taſte.*"
P. 79.
" And bitter ſhame hath ſpoil'd the ſweet *word's* taſte."
P. 519.

15. " *Strong reaſons make* ſtrong *actions.*" P. 81.
" Strong reaſons make *ſtrange* actions." P. 522.

16. " Muſt *make a ſtand at what your highneſs will.*"
P. 89.
" *Doth* make a ſtand at what your highneſs will."
P. 530.

17. " *Had none, my lord! why, did* not you *provoke me?*"
P. 96.
" Had none, my lord! why, did *you not* provoke me?"
P. 536.

18. Mad'ſt *it no conſcience to deſtroy a king.*" P. 97.
" *Made* it no conſcience to deſtroy a king." P. 537.

19. " *Sir, ſir, impatience has* its *privilege.*" P. 102.
" Sir, ſir, impatience has *his* privilege." P. 541.

20. " *Or, when he doom'd this beauty to* the *grave,—*"
P. 102.
" Or, when he doom'd this beauty to a *grave,—*"
P. 541.

there are one hundred thouſand lines in theſe plays, and that it often was neceſſary to conſult

21. "'*To the yet-unbegotten* ſins *of* time." P. 102.
" To the yet-unbegotten *ſin* of *times*." P. 541.

22. " *And breathing to* this *breathleſs excellence,*—" P. 102.
" And breathing to *his* breathleſs excellence,—" P. 542.

23. " *And your* ſupplies, *which you have wiſh'd ſo long,*—" P. 121.
" And your *ſupply*, which you have wiſh'd ſo long,—" P. 561.

24. " *What's that to thee? Why may* I not *demand*—" P. 122.
" What's that to thee? Why may *not I* demand—" P. 562.

25. " *O, my ſweet ſir, news* fitted *to the night.*" P. 123.
" O, my ſweet ſir, news *fitting* to the night." P. 563.

26. " *Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,*
" *Leaves them*; inviſible *his ſiege is now*
" *Againſt the mind,*—" P. 124.
" Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,
" Leaves them inviſible; *and* his ſiege is now
" Againſt the mind,—" P. 565.

27. " *The ſalt* of *them* is hot." P. 125.
" The ſalt *in* them is hot." P. 568.

Two other reſtorations in this play I have not ſet down:
" Before we will lay *down* our juſt-borne arms—"
and— Act II. ſc. ii.
" Be theſe ſad *ſigns* confirmers of thy word."
Act III. ſc. i.
becauſe I pointed them out on a former occaſion.

It may perhaps be urged that ſome of the variations in theſe liſts, are of no great conſequence; but to preſerve our poet's genuine text is certainly important; for otherwiſe, as Dr. Johnſon has juſtly obſerved, "the hiſtory of our language will be loſt;" and as our poet's words are changed, we are conſtantly in danger of loſing his meaning alſo. Every reader muſt wiſh to peruſe what Shakſpeare wrote, ſupported at once by the authority of the authentick copies, and the uſage of his contemporaries, rather than what the editor of the ſecond folio, or Pope, or Hanmer, or Warburton, have arbitrarily ſubſtituted in its place.

ſix or ſeven volumes, in order to aſcertain by which of the preceding editors, from the time of the publication of the ſecond folio, each emendation was made, it will eaſily be believed, that this was not effected without much trouble.

Whenever I mention *the old copy* in my notes, if the play be one originally printed in quarto, I mean the firſt quarto copy; if the play appeared originally in folio, I mean the firſt folio; and when I mention the old copies, I mean the firſt quarto and firſt folio, which, when that expreſſion is uſed, it may be concluded, concur in the ſame reading. In like manner, *the folio* always means the firſt folio, and *the quarto*, the earlieſt quarto, with the exceptions already mentioned. In general, however, the date of each quarto is given, when it is cited. Where there are two quarto copies printed in the ſame year, they are particularly diſtinguiſhed, and the variations noticed.

The two great duties of an editor are, to exhibit the genuine text of his author, and to explain his obſcurities. Both of theſe objects have been ſo conſtantly before my eyes, that, I am confident, one of them will not be found to have been neglected for the other. I can with perfect truth ſay, with Dr. Johnſon, that "not a ſingle paſſage in the whole work has appeared to me obſcure, which I have not endeavoured to illuſtrate." I have examined the notes of all the editors, and my own

Let me not, however, be miſunderſtood. *All* theſe variations have not been diſcovered by the preſent collation; ſome of them having been pointed out by preceding editors; but ſuch as had been already noticed were merely pointed out: the original readings are now eſtabliſhed and ſupported by the uſage of our poet himſelf and that of his contemporaries, and reſtored to the text, inſtead of being degraded to the bottom of the page.

former remarks, with equal rigour; and have endeavoured as much as poſſible to avoid all controverſy, having conſtantly had in view a philanthropick obſervation made by the editor above mentioned: "I know not (ſays that excellent writer,) why our editors ſhould, with ſuch implacable anger, perſecute their predeceſſors. Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ λάκτιζουσιν, the dead, it is true, can make no reſiſtance, they may be attacked with great ſecurity; but ſince they can neither feel nor mend, the ſafety of mauling them ſeems greater than the pleaſure: nor perhaps would it much misbeſeem us to remember, amidſt our triumphs over the *nonſenſical* and the *ſenſeleſs*, that we likewiſe are men; that *debemur morti*, and, as Swift obſerved to Burnet, ſhall ſoon be among the dead ourſelves."

I have in general given the true explication of a paſſage, by whomſoever made, without loading the page with the preceding unſucceſsful attempts at elucidation, and by this means have obtained room for much additional illuſtration: for, as on the one hand, I truſt very few ſuperfluous or unneceſſary annotations have been admitted, ſo on the other, I believe, that not a ſingle valuable explication of any obſcure paſſage in theſe plays has ever appeared, which will not be found in the following volumes.

The admirers of this poet will, I truſt, not merely pardon the great acceſſion of new notes in the preſent edition, but examine them with ſome degree of pleaſure. An idle notion has been propagated, that Shakſpeare has been *buried under his commentators*; and it has again and again been repeated by the taſteleſs and the dull, "that notes, though often neceſſary, are *neceſſary evils*." There is no perſon, I believe, who has an higher reſpect

for the authority of Dr. Johnſon than I have; but he has been miſunderſtood, or miſrepreſented, as if theſe words contained a general caution to *all* the readers of this poet. Dr. Johnſon, in the part of his preface here alluded to, is addreſſing the *young* reader, to whom Shakſpeare is *new*; and him he very judiciouſly counſels to "read every play from the firſt ſcene to the laſt, with utter negligence of all his commentators.—Let him read on, through brightneſs and obſcurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preſerve his comprehenſion of the dialogue, and his intereſt in the fable." But to much the greater and more enlightened part of his readers, (for how few are there comparatively to whom Shakſpeare is new?) he gives a very different advice: Let them to whom the pleaſures of novelty have ceaſed, "attempt exactneſs, and read the commentators."

During the era of conjectural criticiſm and capricious innovation, notes were indeed evils; while one page was covered with ingenious ſophiſtry in ſupport of ſome idle conjecture, and another was waſted in its overthrow, or in erecting a new fabrick equally unſubſtantial as the former. But this era is now happily paſt away; and conjecture and emendation have given place to rational explanation. We ſhall never, I hope, again be told, that "as the beſt gueſſer was the beſt diviner, ſo he may be ſaid in ſome meaſure to be the beſt editor of Shakſpeare."[1] Let me not, however, be ſuppoſed an enemy to all conjectural emendation; ſometimes undoubtedly we muſt have recourſe to it; but, like the machinery of the ancient drama, let it not be reſorted to except in caſes of difficulty;

[1] Newton's Preface to his edition of Milton.

niſi dignus vindici nodus. "I wiſh (ſays Dr. Johnſon) we all conjectured leſs, and explained more." When our poet's entire library ſhall have been diſcovered, and the fables of all his plays traced to their original ſource, when every temporary alluſion ſhall have been pointed out, and every obſcurity elucidated, then, and not till then, let the accumulation of notes be complained of. I ſcarcely remember ever to have looked into a book of the age of Queen Elizabeth, in which I did not find ſomewhat that tended to throw a light on theſe plays. While our object is, to ſupport and eſtabliſh what the poet wrote, to illuſtrate his phraſeology by comparing it with that of his contemporaries, and to explain his fugitive alluſions to cuſtoms long ſince diſuſed and forgotten, while this object is kept ſteadily in view, if even every line of his plays were accompanied with a comment, every intelligent reader would be indebted to the induſtry of him who produced it. Such uniformly has been the object of the notes now preſented to the publick. Let us then hear no more of this barbarous jargon concerning Shakſpeare's having been *elucidated* into *obſcurity*, and buried under the load of his commentators. Dryden is ſaid to have regretted the ſucceſs of his own inſtructions, and to have lamented that at length, in conſequence of his critical prefaces, the town had become too ſkilful to be eaſily ſatisfied. The ſame obſervation may be made with reſpect to many of theſe objectors, to whom the meaning of ſome of our poet's moſt difficult paſſages is now become ſo familiar, that they fancy they originally underſtood them "without a prompter;" and with great gravity exclaim againſt the unneceſſary illuſtrations furniſhed by his Editors: nor ought we

much to wonder at this; for our poet himſelf has told us,

" ———— 'tis a common proof,
" That lowlineſs is young ambition's ladder,
" Whereto the climber upward turns his face;
" But when he once attains the upmoſt round,
" He then unto the ladder turns his back;
" Looks in the clouds."—

I have conſtantly made it a rule in reviſing the notes of former editors, to compare ſuch paſſages as they have cited from any author, with the book from which the extract was taken, if I could procure it; by which ſome inaccuracies have been rectified. The incorrect extract made by Dr. Warburton from Saviola's treatiſe on *Honour and Honourable Quarrels*, to illuſtrate a paſſage in *As you like it*, fully proves the propriety of ſuch a collation.

At the end of the tenth volume I have added an Appendix, containing corrections, and ſupplemental obſervations, made too late to be annexed to the plays to which they belong. Some object to an Appendix; but, in my opinion, with very little reaſon. No book can be the worſe for ſuch a ſupplement; ſince the reader, if ſuch be his caprice, need not examine it. If the objector means, that he wiſhes that all the information contained in an Appendix, were properly diſpoſed in the preceding volumes, it muſt be acknowledged that ſuch an arrangement would be extremely deſirable: but as well might he require from the elephant the ſprightlineſs and agility of the ſquirrel, or from the ſquirrel the wiſdom and ſtrength of the elephant, as expect, that an editor's lateſt thoughts, ſuggeſted by diſcurſive reading while the ſheets that compoſe his volumes were paſſing through the

preſs, ſhould form a part of his original work; that information acquired too late to be employed in its proper place, ſhould yet be found there.

That the very few ſtage-directions which the old copies exhibit, were not taken from our author's manuſcripts, but furniſhed by the players, is proved by one in *Macbeth*, Act IV. ſc. i. where "*A ſhow of eight kings*" is directed, "*and* Banquo *laſt, with a glaſs in his hand*;" though from the very words which the poet has written for Macbeth, it is manifeſt that the glaſs ought to be borne by the eighth king, and not by Banquo. All the ſtage-directions therefore throughout this work I have conſidered as wholly in my power, and have regulated them in the beſt manner I could. The reader will alſo, I think, be pleaſed to find the place in which every ſcene is ſuppoſed to paſs, preciſely aſcertained: a ſpecies of information, for which, though it often throws light on the dialogue, we look in vain in the ancient copies, and which has been too much neglected by the modern editors.

The play of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, which is now once more reſtored to our author, I originally intended to have ſubjoined, with *Titus Andronicus*, to the tenth volume; but, to preſerve an equality of ſize in my volumes, have been obliged to give it a different place. The hand of Shakſpeare being indubitably found in that piece, it will, I doubt not, be conſidered as a valuable acceſſion; and it is of little conſequence where it appears.

It has long been thought, that *Titus Andronicus* was not written originally by Shakſpeare; about ſeventy years after his death, Ravenſcroft having mentioned that he had been "told by ſome anciently converſant with the ſtage, that our poet only gave ſome maſter-touches to one or two of the

principal parts or characters." The very curious papers lately diſcovered in Dulwich College, from which large extracts are given at the end of the *Hiſtory of the Stage,* prove, what I long ſince ſuſpected, that this play, and *The Firſt Part of King Henry VI.* were in poſſeſſion of the ſcene when Shakſpeare began to write for the ſtage; and the ſame manuſcripts ſhow, that it was then very common for a dramatick poet to alter and amend the work of a preceding writer. The queſtion therefore is now deciſively ſettled; and undoubtedly ſome additions were made to both theſe pieces by Shakſpeare. It is obſervable that the ſecond ſcene of the third act of *Titus Andronicus* is not found in the quarto copy printed in 1611. It is therefore highly probable, that this ſcene was added by our author; and his hand may be traced in the preceding act, as well as in a few other places.[2] The additions which he made to *Pericles* are much more numerous, and therefore more ſtrongly entitle it to a place among the dramatick pieces which he has adorned by his pen.

With reſpect to the other conteſted plays, *Sir John Oldcaſtle, The London Prodigal, &c.* which have now for near two centuries been falſely aſcribed to our author, the manuſcripts above mentioned completely clear him from that imputation; and prove, that while his great modeſty made him ſet but little value on his own inimitable productions, he could patiently endure to have the miſerable traſh of other writers publickly imputed to him, without taking any meaſure to vindicate

[2] If ever the account-book of Mr. Heminge ſhall be diſcovered, we ſhall probably find in it—"*Paid to William Shakſpeare for* mending *Titus Andronicus.*" See Vol. III.

his fame. *Sir John Oldcaſtle*, we find from indubitable evidence, though aſcribed in the title-page to "William Shakſpeare," and printed in the year 1600, when his fame was in its meridian, was the joint-production of four other poets; Michael Drayton, Anthony Mundy, Richard Hathwaye, and Robert Wilſon.[3]

In the Diſſertation annexed to the three parts of *King Henry the Sixth*, I have diſcuſſed at large the queſtion concerning their authenticity; and have aſſigned my reaſons for thinking that the ſecond and third of thoſe plays were formed by Shakſpeare, on two elder dramas now extant. Any diſquiſition therefore concerning theſe controverted pieces is here unneceſſary.

Some years ago I publiſhed a ſhort Eſſay on the economy and uſages of our old theatres. The Hiſtorical Account of the Engliſh Stage, which has been formed on that eſſay, has ſwelled to ſuch a ſize, in conſequence of various reſearches ſince made, and a great acceſſion of very valuable materials, that is it become almoſt a new work. Of theſe, the moſt important are the curious papers which have been diſcovered at Dulwich, and the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Maſter of the Revels to King James and King Charles the Firſt, which have contributed to throw much light on our dramatick hiſtory, and furniſhed ſome ſingular anecdotes of the poets of thoſe times.

Twelve years have elapſed ſince the Eſſay on the order of time in which the plays of Shakſpeare were written, firſt appeared. A re-examination of theſe plays ſince that time has furniſhed me with

[3] Vol. III. *Additions.*

ſeveral particulars in confirmation of what I had formerly ſuggeſted on this ſubject. On a careful reviſal of that Eſſay, which, I hope, is improved as well as conſiderably enlarged, I had the ſatiſfaction of obſerving that I had found reaſon to attribute but two plays to an era widely diſtant from that to which they had been originally aſcribed; and to make only a minute change in the arrangement of a few others. Some information, however, which has been obtained ſince that Eſſay was printed in its preſent form, inclines me to think, that one of the two plays which I allude to, *The Winter's Tale*, was a ſtill later production than I have ſuppoſed; for I have now good reaſon to believe, that it was firſt exhibited in the year 1613;[4] and that conſequently it muſt have been one of our poet's lateſt works.

Though above a century and a half has elapſed ſince the death of Shakſpeare, it is ſomewhat extraordinary, (as I obſerved on a former occaſion,) that none of his various editors ſhould have attempted to ſeparate his genuine poetical compoſitions from the ſpurious performances with which they have been long intermixed; or have taken the trouble to compare them with the earlieſt and moſt authentick copies. Shortly after his death, a very incorrect impreſſion of his poems was iſſued out, which in every ſubſequent edition, previous to the year 1780, was implicitly followed. They have been carefully reviſed, and with many additional illuſtrations are now a ſecond time faithfully printed from the original copies, excepting only

[4] See *Emendations and Additions*, Vol. I. Part II. p. 286, [i. e. Mr. Malone's edition.]

The paragraph alluded to, in the preſent edition, will ſtand in its proper place. STEEVENS.

Venus and Adonis, of which I have not been able to procure the firſt impreſſion. The ſecond edition, printed in 1596, was obligingly tranſmitted to me by the late Reverend Thomas Warton, of whoſe friendly and valuable correſpondence I was deprived by death, when theſe volumes were almoſt ready to be iſſued from the preſs. It is painful to recollect how many of (I had almoſt ſaid) my coadjutors have died ſince the preſent work was begun:—the elegant ſcholar, and ingenious writer, whom I have juſt mentioned; Dr. Johnſon, and Mr. Tyrwhitt: men, from whoſe approbation of my labours I had promiſed myſelf much pleaſure, and whoſe ſtamp could give a value and currency to any work.

With the materials which I have been ſo fortunate as to obtain, relative to our poet, his kindred, and friends, it would not have been difficult to have formed a new Life of Shakſpeare, leſs meagre and imperfect than that left us by Mr. Rowe: but the information which I have procured having been obtained at very different times, it is neceſſarily diſperſed, partly in the copious notes ſubjoined to Rowe's Life, and partly in the Hiſtorical Account of our old actors. At ſome future time I hope to weave the whole into one uniform and connected narrative.

My inquiries having been carried on almoſt to the very moment of publication, ſome circumſtances relative to our poet were obtained too late to be introduced into any part of the preſent work. Of theſe due uſe will be made hereafter.

The prefaces of Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton, I have not retained, becauſe they appeared to me to throw no light on our author or his works: the room which they would have taken up, will,

I truſt, be found occupied by more valuable matter.

As ſome of the preceding editors have juſtly been condemned for innovation, ſo perhaps (for of objections there is no end,) I may be cenſured for too ſtrict an adherence to the ancient copies. I have conſtantly had in view the Roman ſentiment adopted by Dr. Johnſon, that "it is more honourable to ſave a citizen than to deſtroy an enemy," and, like him, "have been more careful to protect than to attack."—"I do not wiſh the reader to forget, (ſays the ſame writer,) that the moſt commodious (and he might have added, the moſt forcible and elegant,) is not always the true reading."[5] On this principle I have uniformly proceeded, having reſolved never to deviate from the authentick copies, merely becauſe the phraſeology was harſh or uncommon. Many paſſages, which have heretofore been conſidered as corrupt, and are now ſupported by the uſage of contemporary writers, fully prove the propriety of this caution.[6]

[5] *King Henry IV.* Part II.

[6] See particularly *The Merchant of Venice,* Vol. VII. p. 297:

"——That many may be meant
"By the fool multitude."

with the note there.

We undoubtedly ſhould not now write—

"But, leſt myſelf be *guilty to* ſelf-wrong,—"

yet we find this phraſe in *The Comedy of Errors,* Act III. Vol. XX. See alſo *The Winter's Tale,* Vol. IX. p. 420:

"——This your ſon-in-law,
"And ſon unto the king, (*whom* heavens directing,)
"Is troth-plight to your daughter."

Meaſure for Meaſure, Vol. VI. p. 358: "—to be ſo *bared,*—." *Coriolanus,* Vol. XVI. p. 148, n. 2:

"*Which* often, thus, correcting thy ſtout heart," &c.

Hamlet, Vol. XVIII. p. 40:

"That he might not *beteem* the winds of heaven," &c.

The rage for innovation till within theſe laſt thirty years was ſo great, that many words were diſmiſſed from our poet's text, which in his time were current in every mouth. In all the editions ſince that of Mr. Rowe, in the Second Part of *King Henry IV.* the word *channel*[7] has been rejected, and *kennel* ſubſtituted in its room, though the former term was commonly employed in the ſame ſenſe in the time of our author; and the learned Biſhop of Worceſter has ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to prove that in *Cymbeline* the poet wrote—not *ſhakes*, but *ſhuts* or *checks*, "all our buds from growing;"[8] though the authenticity of the original reading is eſtabliſhed beyond all controverſy by two other paſſages of Shakſpeare. Very ſoon, indeed, after his death, this rage for innovation ſeems to have ſeized his editors; for in the year 1616 an edition of his *Rape of Lucrece* was publiſhed, which was ſaid to be *newly reviſed and corrected*; but in which, in fact, ſeveral arbitrary changes were made, and the ancient diction rejected for one ſomewhat more modern. Even in the firſt complete collection of his plays publiſhed in 1623,

As you like it, Vol. VIII. p. 59, n. 7:
"My voice is *ragged*,——."
Cymbeline, Vol. XVIII. p. 647, n. 2:
"Whom heavens, in juſtice, (both on her and hers,)
"Have laid moſt heavy hand."

[7] Act II. ſc. i: "—throw the quean in the *channel*." In that paſſage, as in many others, I have ſilently reſtored the original reading, without any obſervation; but the word in this ſenſe, being now obſolete, ſhould have been illuſtrated by a note. This defect, however, will be found remedied in *K. Henry VI.* P. II. Act II. ſc. ii:
"As if a *channel* ſhould be call'd a ſea."

[8] Hurd's Hor. 4th. edit. Vol. I. p. 55.

ſome changes were undoubtedly made from ignorance of his meaning and phraſeology. They had, I ſuppoſe, been made in the playhouſe copies after his retirement from the theatre. Thus in *Othello*, Brabantio is made to call to his domeſticks to raiſe "ſome ſpecial officers of *might*," inſtead of "officers of *night*;" and the phraſe "*of all loves*," in the ſame play, not being underſtood, "*for love's ſake*" was ſubſtituted in its room." So, in *Hamlet*, we have *ere ever* for *or ever*, and *rites* inſtead of the more ancient word, *crants*. In *King Lear*, Act I. ſc. i. the ſubſtitution of—"Goes thy heart with this?" inſtead of—"Goes this with thy heart?" without doubt aroſe from the ſame cauſe. In the plays of which we have no quarto copies, we may be ſure that ſimilar innovations were made, though we have now no certain means of detecting them.

After what has been proved concerning the ſophiſtications and corruptions of the Second Folio, we cannot be ſurprized that when theſe plays were republiſhed by Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century from a later folio, in which the interpolations of the former were all preſerved, and many new errors added, almoſt every page of his work was diſfigured by accumulated corruptions. In Mr. Pope's edition our author was not leſs miſrepreſented; for though by examining the oldeſt copies he detected ſome errors, by his numerous fanciful alterations the poet was ſo completely modernized, that I am confident, had he "re-viſited the glimpſes of the moon," he would not have underſtood his own works. From the quartos indeed a few valuable reſtorations were made; but all the advantage that was thus obtained,

was outweighed by arbitrary changes, tranſpoſitions, and interpolations.

The readers of Shakſpeare being diſguſted with the liberties taken by Mr. Pope, the ſubſequent edition of Theobald was juſtly preferred; becauſe he profeſſed to adhere to the ancient copies more ſtrictly than his competitor, and illuſtrated a few paſſages by extracts from the writers of our poet's age. That his work ſhould at this day be conſidered of any value, only ſhows how long impreſſions will remain, when they are once made; for Theobald, though not ſo great an innovator as Pope, was yet a conſiderable innovator; and his edition being printed from that of his immediate predeceſſor, while a few arbitrary changes made by Pope were detected, innumerable ſophiſtications were ſilently adopted. His knowledge of the contemporary authors was ſo ſcanty, that all the illuſtration of that kind diſperſed throughout his volumes, has been exceeded by the reſearches which have ſince been made for the purpoſe of elucidating a ſingle play.

Of Sir Thomas Hanmer it is only neceſſary to ſay, that he adopted almoſt all the innovations of Pope, adding to them whatever caprice dictated.

To him ſucceeded Dr. Warburton, a critick, who (as hath been ſaid of Salmaſius) ſeems to have erected his throne on a heap of ſtones, that he might have them at hand to throw at the heads of all thoſe who paſſed by. His unbounded licence in ſubſtituting his own chimerical conceits in the place of the author's genuine text, has been ſo fully ſhown by his reviſers, that I ſuppoſe no critical reader will ever again open his volumes. An hundred ſtrappadoes, according to an Italian co-

mick writer, would not have induced Petrarch, were he living, to ſubſcribe to the meaning which certain commentators after his death had by their gloſſes extorted from his works. It is a curious ſpeculation to conſider how many thouſand would have been requiſite for this editor to have inflicted on our great dramatick poet for the ſame purpoſe. The defence which has been made for Dr. Warburton on this ſubject, by ſome of his friends, is ſingular. "He well knew," it has been ſaid, "that much the greater part of his notes do not throw any light on the poet of whoſe works he undertook the reviſion, and that he frequently imputed to Shakſpeare a meaning of which he never thought; but the editor's great object was to diſplay his own learning, not to illuſtrate his author, and this end he obtained; for in ſpite of all the clamour againſt him, his work added to his reputation as a ſcholar."—Be it ſo then; but let none of his admirers ever dare to unite his name with that of Shakſpeare; and let us at leaſt be allowed to wonder, that the learned editor ſhould have had ſo little reſpect for the greateſt poet that has appeared ſince the days of Homer, as to uſe a commentary on his works merely as "*a ſtalking-horſe, under the preſentation of which he might ſhoot his wit.*"

At length the taſk of reviſing theſe plays was undertaken by one, whoſe extraordinary powers of mind, as they rendered him the admiration of his contemporaries, will tranſmit his name to poſterity as the brighteſt ornament of the eighteenth century; and will tranſmit it without competition, if we except a great orator, philoſopher, and ſtateſman,[9] now living, whoſe talents and virtues are

[9] The Right Honourable Edmund Burke.

an honour to human nature. In 1765, Dr. Johnſon's edition, which had long been impatiently expected, was given to the publick. His admirable preface, (perhaps the fineſt compoſition in our language,) his happy, and in general juſt, characters of theſe plays, his refutation of the falſe gloſſes of Theobald and Warburton, and his numerous explications of involved and difficult paſſages, are too well known, to be here enlarged upon; and therefore I ſhall only add, that his vigorous and comprehenſive underſtanding threw more light on his author than all his predeceſſors had done.

In one obſervation, however, concerning our poet, I do not entirely concur with him. "It is not (he remarks) very grateful to conſider how little the ſucceſſion of editors has added to this author's power of pleaſing. He was read, admired, ſtudied and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him."

He certainly was read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated, at the period mentioned; but ſurely not in the ſame degree as at preſent. The ſucceſſion of editors has effected this; it has made him underſtood; it has made him popular; it has ſhown every one who is capable of reading, how much ſuperior he is not only to Jonſon and Fletcher, whom the bad taſte of the laſt age from the time of the Reſtoration to the end of the century ſet above him, but to all the dramatick poets of antiquity:

"——— Jam monte potitus,
"Ridet anhelantem dura ad veſtigia turbam."

Every author who pleaſes muſt ſurely pleaſe

more as he is more underſtood, and there can be no doubt that Shakſpeare is now infinitely better underſtood than he was in the laſt century. To ſay nothing of the people at large, it is clear that Dryden himſelf, though a great admirer of our poet, and D'Avenant, though he wrote for the ſtage in the year 1627, did not always underſtand him.[1] The very books which are neceſſary to our

[1] "The tongue in general is ſo much refined ſince Shakſpeare's time, that many of his words, and more of his phraſes, are *ſcarce intelligible.*" Preface to Dryden's *Troilus and Creſſida.* The various changes made by Dryden in particular paſſages in that play, and by him and D'Avenant in *The Tempeſt*, prove deciſively that they frequently did not underſtand our poet's language.

In his defence of the Epilogue to *The Conqueſt of Granada*, Dryden arraigns Ben Jonſon for uſing the perſonal, inſtead of the neutral, pronoun, and *unfeard* for *unafraid*:

"Though heaven ſhould ſpeak with all *his* wrath at once,
"We ſhould ſtand upright, and *unfear'd.*"

"*His* (ſays he) is ill ſyntax with *heaven*, and by *unfear'd* he means *unafraid*; words of a quite contrary ſignification.—He perpetually uſes *ports* for *gates*, which is an affected error in him, to introduce Latin by the loſs of the Engliſh idiom."

Now *his* for *its*, however ill the ſyntax may be, was the common language of the time; and to *fear*, in the ſenſe of to *terrify*, is found not only in all the poets, but in every dictionary of that age. With reſpect to *ports*, Shakſpeare, who will not be ſuſpected of affecting Latiniſms, frequently employs that word in the ſame ſenſe as Jonſon has done, and as probably the whole kingdom did; for the word is ſtill ſo uſed in Scotland.

D'Avenant's alteration of *Macbeth*, and *Meaſure for Meaſure*, furniſh many proofs of the ſame kind. In *The Law againſt Lovers*, which he formed on *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *Meaſure for Meaſure*, are theſe lines:

"——— nor do I think,
"The prince has *true* diſcretion who affects it."

The paſſage imitated is in *Meaſure for Meaſure*:

"Nor do I think the man of *ſafe* diſcretion,
"That does affect it."

If our poet's language had been well underſtood, the epithet *ſafe* would not have been rejected. See *Othello*:

author's illuſtration, were of ſo little account in their time, that what now we can ſcarce procure at any price, was then the furniture of the nurſery or ſtall.[2] In fifty years after our poet's death, Dryden mentions that he was then become "*a*

"My blood begins my *ſafer* guides to rule;
"And paſſion, having my beſt judgment collied," &c.

So alſo, Edgar, in *King Lear*:

"The *ſafer ſenſe* will ne'er accommodate
"His maſter thus."

[2] The price of books at different periods may ſerve in ſome meaſure to aſcertain the taſte and particular ſtudy of the age. At the ſale of Dr. Francis Bernard's library in 1698, the following books were ſold at the annexed prices:

FOLIO.

Gower de Confeſſione Amantis.	0	2	6
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OCTAVO.

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little obſolete." In the beginning of the preſent century Lord Shafteſbury complains of his "*rude unpoliſhed ſtile, and his* ANTIQUATED *phraſe and wit*;" and not long afterwards Gildon informs us that he had been rejected from ſome modern collections of poetry on account of his *obſolete language.* Whence could theſe repreſentations have proceeded, but becauſe our poet, not being diligently ſtudied, not being compared with the contemporary writers, was not underſtood? If he had been "read, admired, ſtudied, and imitated," in the ſame degree as he is now, the enthuſiaſm of ſome one or other of his admirers in the laſt age would have induced him to make ſome enquiries concerning the hiſtory of his theatrical career, and the anecdotes of his private life. But no ſuch perſon was found; no anxiety in the publick ſought out any particulars concerning him after the Reſtoration, (if we except the few which were collected by Mr. Aubrey,) though at that time the hiſtory of his life muſt have been known to many; for his ſiſter Joan Hart, who muſt have known much of his early years, did not die till 1646: his favourite daughter, Mrs. Hall, lived till 1649; and his ſecond daughter, Judith, was living at Stratford-upon-Avon in the beginning of the year 1662. His grand-daughter, Lady Barnard, did not die till 1670. Mr. Thomas Combe, to whom Shakſpeare bequeathed his ſword, ſurvived our poet above forty years, having died at Stratford in 1657. His elder brother, William Combe, lived till 1667. Sir Richard Biſhop, who was born in 1585, lived at Bridgetown near Stratford till 1672; and his ſon, Sir William Biſhop, who was born in 1626, died there in 1700. From all theſe perſons without doubt many circumſtances relative to

Shakſpeare might have been obtained; but that was an age as deficient in literary curioſity as in taſte.

It is remarkable that in a century after our poet's death, five editions only of his plays were publiſhed; which probably conſiſted of not more than three thouſand copies. During the ſame period three editions of the plays of Fletcher, and four of thoſe of Jonſon had appeared. On the other hand, from the year 1716 to the preſent time, that is, in ſeventy-four years, but two editions of the former writer, and one of the latter, have been iſſued from the preſs; while above thirty thouſand copies of Shakſpeare have been diſperſed through England.[3] That nearly as many editions of the works of Jonſon as of Shakſpeare ſhould have been demanded in the laſt century, will not appear ſurpriſing, when we recollect what Dryden has related ſoon after the Reſtoration: that "others were then generally preferred before him."[4] By *others* Jonſon

[3] Notwithſtanding our high admiration of Shakſpeare, we are yet without a ſplendid edition of his works, with the illuſtrations which the united efforts of various commentators have contributed; while in other countries the moſt brilliant decorations have been laviſhed on their diſtinguiſhed poets. The editions of Pope and Hanmer, may, with almoſt as much propriety, be called *their* works, as thoſe of Shakſpeare; and therefore can have no claim to be admitted into any elegant library. Nor will the promiſed edition, with engravings, undertaken by Mr. Alderman Boydell, remedy this defect, for it is not to be accompanied with notes. At ſome future, and no very diſtant time, I mean to furniſh the publick with an elegant edition in quarto, (without engravings,) in which the text of the preſent edition ſhall be followed, with the illuſtrations ſubjoined in the ſame page.

[4] In the year 1642, whether from ſome capricious viciſſitude in the publick taſte, or from a general inattention to the drama, we find Shirley complaining that few came to ſee our author's performances:

and Fletcher were meant. To attempt to ſhow to the readers of the preſent day the abſurdity of

" ——————You ſee
" What audience we have: *what company*
" *To Shakſpeare comes?* whoſe mirth did once beguile
" Dull hours, and buſkin'd made even ſorrow ſmile;
" So lovely were the wounds, that men would ſay
" They could endure the bleeding a whole day;
" *He has but few friends lately.*"

Prologue to *The Siſters*.

" Shakſpeare to thee was dull, whoſe beſt jeſt lies
" I'th lady's queſtions, and the fool's replies;
" Old faſhion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town,
" In trunk-hoſe, which our fathers call'd the clown;
" Whoſe wit our nicer times would obſceneneſs call,
" And which made bawdry paſs for comical.
" Nature was all his art; thy vein was free
" As his, but without his ſcurrility."

Verſes on Fletcher, by William Cartwright, 1647.

After the Reſtoration, on the revival of the theatres, the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were eſteemed ſo much ſuperior to thoſe of our author, that we are told by Dryden, " two of their pieces were acted through the year, for one of Shakſpeare's." If his teſtimony needed any corroboration, the following verſes would afford it:

" In our old plays, the humour, love, and paſſion,
" Like doublet, hoſe, and cloak, are out of faſhion;
" That which the world call'd wit in Shakſpeare's age,
" Is laugh'd at, as improper for our ſtage."

Prologue to Shirley's *Love Tricks*, 1667.

" At every ſhop, while *Shakſpeare's* lofty ſtile
" Neglected lies, to mice and worms a ſpoil,
" Gilt on the back, juſt ſmoking from the preſs,
" The apprentice ſhews you D'Urfey's *Hudibras*,
" Crown's *Maſk*, bound up with Settle's choiceſt labours,
" And promiſes ſome new eſſay of Babor's."

SATIRE, publiſhed in 1680.

" —— againſt old as well as new to rage,
" Is the peculiar frenzy of this age.
" Shakſpeare muſt down, and you muſt praiſe no more
" Soft Deſdemona, nor the jealous Moor:

ſuch a preference, would be an inſult to their underſtandings. When we endeavour to trace any thing like a ground for this prepoſterous taſte, we are told of Fletcher's *eaſe*, and Jonſon's *learning*. Of how little uſe his learning was to him, an ingenious writer of our own time has ſhown with that vigour and animation for which he was diſtinguiſhed. "Jonſon, in the ſerious drama, is as much an imitator, as Shakſpeare is an original. He was very learned, as Sampſon was very ſtrong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himſelf under it. We ſee nothing of Jonſon, nor indeed of his admired (but alſo murdered) ancients; for what ſhone in the hiſtorian is a cloud on the poet, and *Catiline* might have been a good play, if Salluſt had never written.

"Who knows whether Shakſpeare might not have thought leſs, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonſon's learning, as Enceladus under Ætna? His mighty genius, indeed, through the moſt mountainous oppreſſion would have breathed

"Shakſpeare, whoſe fruitful genius, happy wit,
"Was fram'd and finiſh'd at a lucky hit,
"The pride of nature, and the ſhame of ſchools,
"Born to create, and not to learn from, rules,
"Muſt pleaſe no more: his baſtards now deride
"Their father's nakedneſs they ought to hide."
Prologue by Sir Charles Sedley, to the *Wary Widow*, 1693.

To the honour of Margaret Ducheſs of Newcaſtle be it remembered, that however fantaſtick in other reſpects, ſhe had taſte enough to be fully ſenſible of our poet's merit, and was one of the firſt who after the Reſtoration publiſhed a very high eulogy on him. See her *Sociable Letters*, folio, 1664, p. 244.

out ſome of his inextinguiſhable fire; yet poſſibly he might not have riſen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatick province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was maſter of two books unknown to many of the profoundly read, though books which the laſt conflagration alone can deſtroy; the book of nature, and that of man."[5]

To this and the other encomiums on our great poet which will be found in the following pages, I ſhall not attempt to make any addition. He has juſtly obſerved, that

> " To guard a title that was rich before,
> " To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
> " To throw a perfume on the violet,
> " To ſmooth the ice, or add another hue
> " Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
> " To ſeek the beauteous eye of heaven to garniſh,
> " Is waſteful and ridiculous exceſs."

Let me, however, be permitted to remark, that beſide all his other tranſcendent merits, he was the great refiner and poliſher of our language. His compound epithets, his bold metaphors, the energy of his expreſſions, the harmony of his numbers, all theſe render the language of Shakſpeare one of his principal beauties. Unfortunately none of his letters, or other proſe compoſitions, not in a dramatick form, have reached poſterity; but if any of them ever ſhall be diſcovered, they will, I am confident, exhibit the ſame perſpicuity,

[5] *Conjectures on Original Compoſition*, by Dr. Edward Young.

the ſame cadence, the ſame elegance and vigour, which we find in his plays. "Words and phraſes," ſays Dryden, "muſt of neceſſity receive a change in ſucceeding ages; but it is almoſt a miracle, that much of his language remains ſo pure; and that he who began dramatick poetry amongſt us, untaught by any, and, as Ben Jonſon tells us, without learning, ſhould by the force of his own genius perform ſo much, that in a manner he has left no praiſe for any who come after him."

In theſe prefatory obſervations my principal object was, to aſcertain the true ſtate and reſpective value of the ancient copies, and to mark out the courſe which has been purſued in the edition now offered to the publick. It only remains, that I ſhould return my very ſincere acknowledgements to thoſe gentlemen, to whoſe good offices I have been indebted in the progreſs of my work. My thanks are particularly due to Francis Ingram, of Ribbisford in Worceſterſhire, Eſq. for the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, and ſeveral other curious papers, which formerly belonged to that gentleman; to Penn Aſheton Curzon, Eſq. for the uſe of the very rare copy of *King Richard III.* printed in 1597; to the Maſter, and the Rev. Mr. Smith, librarian, of Dulwich College, for the Manuſcripts relative to one of our ancient theatres, which they obligingly tranſmitted to me; to John Kipling, Eſq. keeper of the rolls in Chancery, who in the moſt liberal manner directed every ſearch to be made in the Chapel of the Rolls that I ſhould require, with a view to illuſtrate the hiſtory of our poet's life; and to Mr. Richard Clarke, regiſtror of the dioceſe of Worceſter, who with equal liberality, at my requeſt, made many ſearches in his office for

the wills of various perſons. I am alſo in a particular manner indebted to the kindneſs and attention of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, who moſt obligingly made every inquiry in that town and the neighbourhood, which I ſuggeſted as likely to throw any light on the Life of Shakſpeare.

I deliver my book to the world not without anxiety; conſcious, however, that I have ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to render it not unworthy the attention of the publick. If the reſearches which have been made for the illuſtration of our poet's works, and for the diſſertations which accompany the preſent edition, ſhall afford as much entertainment to others, as I have derived from them, I ſhall conſider the time expended on it as well employed. Of the dangerous ground on which I tread, I am fully ſenſible. "Multa ſunt in his ſtudiis (to uſe the words of a venerable fellow-labourer[6] in the mines of Antiquity) *cineri ſuppoſita doloſo.* Errata poſſint eſſe multa à memoria. Quis enim in memoriæ theſauro omnia ſimul ſic complectatur, ut pro arbitratu ſuo poſſit expromere? Errata poſſint eſſe plura ab imperitia. Quis enim tam peritus, ut in cæco hoc antiquitatis mari, cum tempore colluctatus, ſcopulis non allidatur? Hæc tamen à te, humaniſſime lector, tua humanitas, mea induſtria, patriæ charitas, et SHAKSPEARI dignitas, mihi exorent, ut quid mei ſit judicii, ſine aliorum præjudicio libere proferam; ut eâdem via qua alii in his ſtudiis ſolent, inſiſtam; et ut erratis, ſi ego agnoſcam, tu ignoſcas." Thoſe who are the warmeſt admirers of our great poet, and moſt

[6] Camden.

converſant with his writings, beſt know the difficulty of ſuch a work, and will be moſt ready to pardon its defects; remembering, that in all arduous undertakings, it is eaſier to conceive than to accompliſh; that "the will is infinite, and the execution confined; that the deſire is boundleſs, and the act a ſlave to limit." MALONE.

Queen Anne Street, Eaſt,
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END OF VOL. I.

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